Papers, Original and Selected.

SAVED FROM THE GUTTER.

It is nearly twenty-eight years ago since the Ragged School Union was founded. Its promoters found twenty Ragged Schools at work, chiefly on Sundays, with an aggregate of 2,000 scholars. After twenty-eight years' hard work in the dreary byeways of London, there are (exclusive of suburban Schools) 176 Ragged Schools planted amid what Lord Sidney Osborne aptly called "the guilt-gardens" of our modern Babylon. In these, with above 40,000 children on the books, there is an average attendance of 31,000, and about 10,000 adults—or the population of no mean city—mostly saved from the gutter.

Though with a view of restricting the Schools to the destitute and outcast classes, all the Institutions are still called "Ragged *Schools*," yet all the larger ones, from the magnitude of their operations, may be regarded as Social Home Missions This will be seen by an analysis of their operations as detailed in the Twenty-seventh Annual Report of the Ragged School Union. For our present purpose we shall omit the 378 Day and Night Schools, and confine ourselves to their social and evangelistic operations. We find, then, that there are in active operation—

Sunday Schools	237
Ragged Churches	93
Children's Churches	26
Sunday Rest Bands	11
Parents' Meetings	92
Penny Banks	106
Clothing Clubs	79
Infants' Nurseries	3
Bands of Hope	44
	691

It will be seen that 459 of these operations are distinctively

religious, and 232 social. So that, if the religious and social work of Ragged Schools were struck down, either through want of funds or from want of energetic workers, we leave our readers to judge whether the statement of Lord Shaftesbury would not soon prove to be a prophecy—"Without Ragged Schools and kindred societies, London would not be a place safe to live in!"

The number of children who have passed through the London Ragged Schools would startle any one who was not acquainted with the migratory habits of their parents. But from information collected by the School Agents—confirmed as it is by the statistics supplied annually to the Ragged School Union—it appears that, during the past twenty-eight years, no less than 725,000 scholars have attended the London Ragged Schools. During the past ten years alone the number of children admitted has been 399,800, and the average attendance during that period has reached 292,250; or in other words, about three-fourths of the names on the registers have regularly attended for longer or shorter periods. Doubtless the time during which the bulk have remained in the Day or Night Ragged Schools has been very brief; but, taking infants and elder children together, each scholar may be considered as remaining at least one year. That, short as is such attendance, it is not in vain, one fact will prove. Last year the School Agents strictly examined 12,145 Day scholars, all of whom had attained six years. Of these, 3,060 passed in the life and work of Christ; 5,147 passed in reading; 6,315 in writing; and 5,632 in arithmetic. The reading and writing of many, indeed, would have done credit to any middle-class school.

But it may be asked—and we think fairly asked—Can you show any positive good to have arisen to society from Ragged Schools? or, still more directly speaking, Can you show sufficient *social* results to warrant the large sum Ragged Schools have cost during the past twenty-eight years? We said that these questions might be fairly asked, because, if no tangible social results can be produced, the £30,000 they cost annually may be regarded as so much money thrown into the ocean.

But, happily, these questions can be answered by two undeniable facts; namely, the number of scholars who have got work, and the marked diminution in crime since their institution.

Before Ragged Schools were opened, scarcely any effort was made to crush crime in the bud; and thus the Fagins of Field

Lane were allowed to train the "Artful Dodgers" of the slums as professional thieves without molestation. But Ragged School teachers took possession of the very haunts of crime, and taught juvenile thieves, both by precept and practice, the possibility of escaping from a life of crime, and of earning their bread as honest citizens. And what was the fruit of this difficult task? For this we shall not refer either to the records of local Schools, or to the reports of Prison Inspectors, but simply copy the statement of the Earl of Morley, when on the part of Government he introduced the bill for the Prevention of Crime to the House of Lords. He said that "The returns of the Inspectors of Prisons showed that, in 1843, when the population was 16,300,000, the criminals sentenced to penal servitude or transportation amounted to 4,488, and that, in 1869, when transportation was at an end, and when the population was 21,900,000, the criminals sentenced to penal servitude amounted to 2,006. That certainly must be reassuring to those who had an idea that crime was increasing in this country. He believed that the facilities for the detection of crime, increased education, and *the charitable institutions in which the noble earl* (Lord Shaftesbury) *opposite took so much interest, had, to an immense extent, repressed crime in this country.*"

But the social benefits of Ragged Schools can be shown in another way, which equally proves how much they deserve the gratitude of all who are interested—and who is not?—in the nation's welfare. This great social benefit we find in the number of our scholars, mostly dragged out of the gutter, who have obtained situations, and are a credit not only to Ragged Schools, but to the nation at large.

The exact number of "gutter children" who, by earnest "drilling," have been prepared to win their daily bread honestly, we cannot ascertain, but statistics supplied by five of the older Ragged Schools will at least aid us in forming an approximate opinion. Thus, 1.—E. C. states that 12,065 have been admitted into its Day School alone, of whom the large number of 6,400 were placed out at work. 2.—E. reports that it has admitted 13,000 scholars, and that of these 4,800 were put into the way of earning their living. 3.—E. has admitted 1,500 scholars, of whom 310 have obtained situations. 4.—W. C. returns 828 as admitted into its Night School, of whom no less than 583 have gone to work, chiefly as shoeblacks. 5.—S. E. states that 4,273 have been admitted, and

that 3,110, or nearly three out of every four, have obtained situations. It thus appears that these five Schools have admitted 31,663 scholars, of whom 15,202 were so well trained as to get their living by honest industry. If this proportion holds good for the remaining Ragged Schools, it follows that a quarter of a million of "gutter children" have been successfully taught the grand Bible doctrine—"If a man will not work, neither shall he eat."

These figures might be much increased were the following classes added, namely: emigrants, many under the auspices of the Ragged School Union, who are estimated at 3,470; sailors, who amount to 6,700; and soldiers, numbering 3,400. Many of the latter are warrant officers or non-commissioned officers, and are models of sobriety and general good conduct.

But lest any one should suppose that these approximate figures are exaggerated, we may refer to the more satisfactory test supplied by the prizes given by the Ragged School Union during the past eighteen years for faithful service. The conditions are so stringent that thousands never apply for the prize, and hundreds do not come up to what is expected, and so lose the prize of merit, though eligible in other respects. Many more, through obtaining situations miles away, leave their School, and thus it does not get the credit of their social reclamation. Yet, in spite of all these drawbacks, no less than 10,962 prizes have been awarded during the past eighteen years for at least twelve months' good service. If, then, we add to these figures the 13,570 soldiers, sailors, and emigrants, we find that 24,532 scholars were undoubtedly provided for during the past eighteen years.

And here one striking fact of the usefulness of Ragged Schools ought not to be omitted, namely, the number of our teachers who were formerly Ragged scholars. No less than 306 of these earnest voluntary workers were once scholars in the Ragged Schools where they now teach; and for thoroughness they are models to the whole working staff.

With facts like these—and they might be multiplied did space permit—it is painful to find that there is any shadow cast over our future. Some seem to imagine that Ragged Schools have completed their mission; whilst others consider that School Boards can do all that remains to be done for the social reclamation of our wild tribes. That Government education can do much to stem the ignorance which disgraces our country we are the last to deny;

but what we as distinctly affirm is this—that it is powerless to do our *special* social and evangelistic work. Qualified teachers to conduct Day and Night Schools they can doubtless raise; but what of the 3,000 missionary volunteers who, in Ragged Schools, are seeking to socialise and save the outcasts of society? Of this noble band Lord Shaftesbury thus wrote, in his appeal for Ragged Schools, in the *Times* of 13th November last: "Most of them are the sons and daughters of toil, who have found and who find their relaxation and repose in the sacred duty of rescuing the outcasts. Their self-denial in every physical and moral aspect is beyond all praise, and, indeed, beyond the conception of all who have not some personal experience of such scenes. These labours are an epoch in the social history of England."

If, then, our Day and Night Schools were eventually absorbed by the London School Board, with our 700 social and missionary operations, conducted by 3,000 volunteers, what a stupendous agency we should still wield for the social improvement of the lower strata of society. For we cannot believe for one moment that the Christian world would allow our 31,000 Sunday scholars and our 10,000 adults to be withdrawn from the control of those who yearn to save our social pariahs. Nay, we are sure that, so long as "gutter children" exist, willing hearts and ready hands will be found to rescue them from moral and social degradation.

Whilst, then, we point to the cloud, smaller than a man's hand, rising in the horizon, we do not so from dread that Ragged Schools—so far as respects their social and missionary work—are in any peril; but rather to warn any one from halting in this great social crusade. It may be that School Boards may ultimately absorb our week-day scholars, but with the great battle now waging about denominational education, we see no immediate prospect even of this result. But should that time ever arrive, we shall then doubtless be led—as at the outset of the movement—to restrict ourselves to our social and religious work, believing that our utmost energies will be tasked by such efforts. Nor do we believe that either funds or agents will be wanting for this great undertaking. In every emergency Ragged Schools have been helped from Above; and, as in the past, so will it be in the future; for as the work is God's, and not ours, we are sure that he will not give the work and withhold either the means or the workers.

LORD SHAFTESBURY ON THE TRANSFER OF RAGGED SCHOOL BUILDINGS.

Dec. 13, 1871.

LORD SHAFTESBURY, as President of the Ragged School Union, desires to call the attention of the committees and conductors of the several Schools to the conditions on which they have obtained large sums of money for the erection, or enlargement, of many of their buildings.

They were simply and solely for the maintenance and extension of the Ragged School system, and for giving a scriptural education to the outcast children of London.

The transfer, then, of these *buildings* to the Metropolitan School Board without price, and without stipulation of any kind, would be a violation of the terms on which the contributions were received.

If any of the committees are wholly unable, through want of funds, to carry on the work, the buildings should be disposed of by sale or lease, and the proceeds devoted to sustain, as long as possible, the efforts the public have made in behalf of the destitute and forsaken.

THE PRESS ON LORD SHAFTESBURY'S APPEAL FOR RAGGED SCHOOLS.

NOT only has the Christian public responded liberally to Lord Shaftesbury's appeal for Ragged Schools, but the Press generally has given a ready support to our movement. Thus many newspapers have copied the appeal; and others have given most favourable comments. All proves how high is the estimate placed on Ragged Schools by philanthropists of every shade of opinion.

The following extracts from three secular and two religious newspapers we give without any comment.

Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper, Nov. 19th, says that—"The School Board cannot do everything—cannot, as it is at present constituted, do as much as it conceives itself able; but it can do more for the purification of our streets from their idle, vagabond, and ignorant Arabian population, than any or all of the isolated institutions which have hitherto worked in its stead. This is the belief of the most lukewarm supporter of Mr. Forster's plan. Many of the private or corporate institutions, which have done good duty in the measure of their forces during many bygone years, must continue their work for some time to come, and lack the means which they have hitherto possessed. The greatest, and perhaps the most useful of them—the Ragged Schools

of London—suffers much, and needs much to achieve the results to be obtained by its agency.

"Lord Shaftesbury has put forth another appeal on behalf of this Institution. He speaks with knowledge of the good done and of that which is yet to be effected. The buildings planned by the School Board cannot be completed for some considerable time; the teachers to be employed are not found, or are not ready; and the Ragged Schools lose their supporters every day; and the result, as Lord Shaftesbury fears, will be that many of these Schools—the best of their kind at present existent—will close their doors, and the thousands they housed, be turned adrift into the streets once more.

"The natural, inevitable worship of a brand-new improvement of so thorough a character as the School Boards, should not entirely obliterate the gratitude which we owe to those who were their precursors, and perhaps paved the way for their action. The Ragged Schools were revolutionary reforms in their way, when they first arose. The Arabs of London were less known to us than the Arabs of Arabia. Their class was the obscure population of a few dull and squalid quarters, where respectability never penetrated—where the only ray of civilisation came from a policeman's bullseye. Some small wizened face was seen for a moment through a carriage window in the gaslight at a theatre door; opera cloaks and broadcloth brushed occasionally by a tattered sleeve in corduroy; but a shudder was the sole result, and the British Monsieur Prudhomme asked no question of the Cockney Gavroche. A few broad and human-hearted men and women stopped to question, and to amend. They set to work to gather from gutter and slum—units, scores, then thousands, of the little Unwashed, who picked pockets and tendered hands for a livelihood. They broke the beggars' indenture to crime, taught them in their own tongue—the *patois* of the pavement, and taught them morals which had not been theirs—facts and faiths of which they had never heard. The commencement was meagre, mean in the eyes of large philanthropists, who succour by battalions and house their dependants in barracks; one school containing five infants formed the nucleus of the scheme. But it grew, and widened, and bore fruit; and after twenty-seven years could number three hundred Schools, and some thirty thousand scholars. Lord Shaftesbury vouches for the authenticity of the statements. He declares, moreover, that more than three hundred thousand children have issued purified from these Schools since the inauguration of the system. What would have become of these had the means of reclamation failed, or been ignored? What will become of kindred classes, if while the School Board ameliorations are yet unperfected, the Ragged Schools diminish or disappear? We can all answer, who have dared look closely into the dreariest phase of London life. The streets await the outcasts of the Schools; lives—ay, and deaths—of thieves, beggars, and prostitutes—ignorance, brutality, and crime.

"Lord Shaftesbury's appeal should be warmly responded to. Its writer commands thorough confidence in all questions of practical philanthropy; and he has done so much alone, that this call for help should in all justice elicit expression—and proofs of the people's knowledge and gratitude."

The *Globe*, of Nov. 13th, thus writes:—"Lord Shaftesbury, in a letter

to the *Times* this morning, calls attention to a matter of great moment. It would appear that, strong in their anticipation of the benefits which are to result from the labours of the London School Board, the subscribers to the Ragged Schools of the metropolis are withdrawing their support. This must surely be done under an entire misapprehension of the facts. A considerable time must elapse before the Schools of the Board can be brought into operation, and, as Lord Shaftesbury points out, unless the voluntary Schools are supported at least for the next year and a half, 'the great bulk of these Schools will be broken up, and the children turned, as formerly, into the streets.' It is not a moment too soon to warn society against the terrible evils which must ensue from such a lapse of this long and usefully sustained effort for the education of the poor."

The *City Press*, of Nov. 18th, writes as follows:—"Lord Shaftesbury has been pleading the cause of the London Ragged Schools in the *Times*. Adverting to the action of the London School Board, his lordship argues that the present system should be retained until other provision shall have been made. The struggling institutions for which Lord Shaftesbury pleads, and on which so many good and earnest men have expended so much of the 'labour of love,' have accomplished an immense amount of good. 300,000 children have passed through the Ragged Schools; 3,000 voluntary teachers have worked for them; 100,000 have, through the instrumentality of the Ragged School Union alone, been provided for by emigration, in domestic service, in trade, and in the naval service; nearly the whole of whom, if not thus rescued, would have swelled the numbers of our criminal population. Lord Shaftesbury's appeal is that the interval between the close of the old effort and the beginning of the new one may not be attended with a heart-sickening recurrence of suffering and degradation."

The *Record* alludes to Lord Shaftesbury's letter, and remarks that the great practical good resulting from Ragged Schools is not to be disputed; and the statement recently made by Lord Morley in the House of Lords, when propounding the Prevention of Crime Bill, indicates the value which the Government attach to such charitable institutions as a means of preventing crime. The facts stated by Lord Shaftesbury appeal to the liberality of the public with a force far more potential than the eloquence of words.

The *Rock*, of Nov. 17th, states that—"Ever among the foremost in a good cause, Lord Shaftesbury has been pleading the cause of the London Ragged Schools in the *Times*. Adverting to the action of the London School Board, his lordship wisely argues that the present system, however imperfect, should be retained until other provision shall have been made. It is a subject of daily remark that the Board has existed a long time without having any tangible result of its labours to show. The struggling institutions for which Lord Shaftesbury pleads, and on which so many good and earnest men have expended so much of the 'labour of love,' have accomplished an immense amount of good, an amount, indeed, which can never be adequately gauged in this world. 300,000 children have passed through the Ragged Schools. 3,000 voluntary teachers have worked for them and prayed for them; 100,000 have, through the instrumentality of the Ragged School Union alone, been provided for by emigration, in domestic service, in trade,

and in the naval service, nearly the whole of whom, if not thus rescued, would have swelled the numbers of our criminal population. Lord Shaftesbury's appeal is 'that the interval between the close of the old effort and the beginning of the new one may not be attended with a heart-sickening recurrence of suffering and degradation.' Surely that appeal will not be made in vain."

MY SISTER'S HAPPY WORK.

A Story for the New Year.

BY ISABEL MORTON.

It was New Year's Eve, and Amy Morton had retired to her own little room for a quiet hour before joining the rest of the family in the short pleasant walk they must take to reach their church and attend the midnight service.

Seated on a low chair by a cosey fire, we will introduce her to our reader's notice; she is just nineteen, of a medium height, rather fair, and her face is rendered always attractive by the particularly bright, happy expression, both of eyes and mouth. Her parents are moving in the comfortable middle class of society, her father has for many years past been a highly respected doctor in the parish of P——, and one who has worked hand in hand with their much-loved pastor. Amy has one sister and one brother older than herself, the three others are considerably younger, the elder sister usually acting as governess to the little ones. Amy has a large share of leisure time now that her own studies are merely voluntary. One very bright prospect has been of late constantly before her mind: her brother Edward has nearly finished his University course; he is now spending his last Christmas vacation at home; two more terms at Oxford and he will be ready to take his degree; a curacy is awaiting him in the lovely village of D——, and it is Amy's great joy to know that he has promised to take her, his favourite sister, to be his housekeeper and companion as soon as he is settled and has found a suitable house.

On this particular evening she is looking unusually subdued and thoughtful; she has been reviewing with rather an aching heart the events of the year now so swiftly passing away; she had begun it with many earnest resolves to live henceforth to the Lord. At a "confirmation service," two years before, she had been much impressed by the loving faithful counsels of her pastor; ever since she had regularly attended to all the outward forms of religion, but until the beginning of this present year she had not felt any desire for a higher, nobler life; that longing then came; she realised that "she was not her own," and that the Lord whom she professed to follow was one whom it would be her delight to be allowed to serve. The way was soon opened to her; a Christian friend who had long been actively engaged in the Master's service calling at Dr. Morton's one day, early in the year, was speaking of the great need of teachers in a neighbouring Ragged School, and turning to Amy, who was listening with evi-

dent interest, she said, "Would you not like, dear, to help us in trying to reclaim these poor lost ones, and bring them into the Saviour's fold?"

"Oh! Miss F.," Amy replied, "I should like it so much, if only I am not too young and inexperienced."

Her friend looked lovingly at her and said, "If you begin this work in simple childlike trust for heavenly guidance, I have no fear for you, dear Amy; there is no knowledge so valuable to us as that gained by endeavouring to teach others."

And so it was arranged that on the following Sunday Amy Morton should accompany Miss F——. It was not without many misgivings that she first took her seat, as teacher, amongst a group of wild, and it must be confessed, rather objectionably dirty girls; but she was not one to be easily discouraged by these minor difficulties; she set herself at once to the great task of securing their attention by placing the truths she wished to teach in the most attractive form before them.

We wil not follow her as week after week she persevered in what often seemed to her an almost hopeless work: but towards the close of the year the teachers had met together to consider the best plan for reducing the school to better order and discipline. Unquestionably the boys were the most troublesome element; it was by no means a rare case to see something very like a fight going on between the gentleman teacher and some unruly scholar. The idea was suggested, why not try (as others have done successfully) the influence of the female mind upon these rough ones? and the excellent superintendent expressed himself most willing to do so, if there could be found any brave enough to make the attempt. Amy was one of the first to volunteer; she agreed to take a class of boys for a month, with one stipulation, that they should be left entirely to her control, no harsh measures being adopted whilst they were under her charge. Mr. G—— inquired, "How, then, do you propose to govern them, Miss Morton?"

"By love," she replied.

He shook his head incredulously and said, "You will not get within the thinnest crust of their affections by that time."

He was mistaken, notwithstanding immense anxiety and perplexity as to the right course to take with them. Before the month had passed the boys had already learnt to appreciate the soft winning ways of their bright young teacher, and though troublesome to the last degree they had quite appropriated her as specially their own, and in a measure she had succeeded in gaining their affection. This may seem a small thing to some, but not to those who know what Ragged School teaching is; they will readily understand that it is the foundation of all success with these poor neglected ones, who are so unaccustomed to love and kindness.

And now another month has passed and the year is at an end. Amy is musing anxiously over her work; she feels so inadequate to the great task before her, she needs so much wisdom to know how to deal with these lads individually, to check the current of evil so strong in their nature; her lessons must have such careful thought in order that she may be in some measure prepared for their strange and unlooked-for questions.

At times she has been obliged to shut up the Bible in despair, shocked at the utter carelessness and levity with which they treated that sacred volume; still she can look back upon one or two evenings when she has discerned amid all their fun and waywardness some signs of softened feeling, and for a while a hushed solemnity, when she has pictured to them some marvellous miracle of healing by the Great Physician, and then led them on to the close of that holy life, and told them the story of the Cross in all its sweet simplicity, showing them how it sets forth so plainly God's horror of sin, and the exceeding love of Jesus the God-man to us sinners, in that he willingly suffered in our stead.

Let us now follow Amy and her family to the midnight service, and listen to the earnest heart-stirring words of their pastor. Self-dedication is his watchword for the New Year; he has some special thought for each class of his hearers, and towards the end he speaks most lovingly to those young ones of his flock who have taken upon themselves the name of disciple, and who have begun to work for their Master. Alluding to failures, he tells them how much oftener God teaches us by them instead of success, and that "this discipline, though not pleasant, is so safe for us, guarding us from the danger of thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think, and keeping ever in our minds the fact that at service unstained by sin, and free from the pain of anxiety, perplexity, and disappointment, is reserved for the life to come. Imitation of Christ the ideal, to which the Christian aspires, involves, as he told us, taking up a cross: we cannot have this too clearly before us. The cross now, the crown by-and-by. There would be no cross if our work produced only satisfaction. The honour and excellence of our probation consists in this, that we have to work face to face with a deep sense of unworthiness, in weariness as well as in strength; to work and trust, in the dark as well as in the light." This was just the message Amy needed. In the silence which followed these words whilst waiting for the midnight hour to sound, she knelt, and dedicated herself anew to the Lord, beseeching him to make her meet for his service, and to enable her by the constant presence of his Spirit within her heart to live to his praise and glory.

New Year's Eve has come round again; let us see what it has brought to Amy Morton. She has been reviewing the past year with very mingled feelings to-day. She realises that she has had much to make her heart rejoice, but one great disappointment has come to her within the last few months, which at first weighed very heavily upon her spirits. Her darling brother, whose home she had expected to share, has found one dearer than a sister to be his companion and helper, and he and his young bride are now settled in their pretty home in the village of D——. It was a most unexpected blow to Amy's fond hopes, but already the silver lining to this dark cloud is beginning to appear. She has been to visit her brother and his wife; their kindness and affectionate care of her has proved very soothing, and the pleasure she experienced on her return to her family and to her work in the Ragged School has convinced her that her own will would not have been the wisest or the best.

That earnest self-dedication of the previous year has not been without

its fruits. Amy has laboured more diligently and more humbly in the spirit of those sweet lines,

"Content to fill a little space,
So Thou be glorified."

And her boys have become very dear to her. There is a great change for the better in the whole class; two of the roughest and the poorest ones are much softened in their manner, and are doing well in situations which their young teacher has procured for them; and of another Amy has had the unspeakable joy of knowing that he has passed from death unto life. The Holy Spirit has already blessed the word sown in much weakness, and only a few weeks ago S. H., after an interview with the minister, Mr. A., had knelt by the side of his teacher at the Lord's table, a humble devoted follower of that Saviour whom he had thus early learnt to love. This was a most precious encouragement to Amy; never will she forget the thrill of surprised and grateful emotion with which she listened to the words of her scholar one evening when he came (as she liked them to do) for a little quiet talk at her own home; he said he had been taught Scripture truths before, but it was she who had made a real impression upon his heart. He used often to go home, after the class, thinking, "I can see how bright and happy my teacher is; if what she tells us about makes her so happy, why shouldn't it make me happy too?" And it was this thought, he told her, which first led him to decide for Christ.

Amy feels, as the events of the past year come crowding up for recollection, she can indeed say, the blessings have far outweighed the trials. She is learning to "trust in the dark as well as in the light," and here we may take leave of her, assured that He who has begun the good work will perfect it to the end.

My dear readers, I want this to be a very Happy New Year to you. Has the story of Amy Morton's work aroused any feeling within you that you also would like to be one of the labourers in your Master's vineyard? if so, ask Him to make you meet for His service, and to open the way for you. These are not the days for idle Christians; "the harvest is great," the enemy is very active, and "the time is short;" come, then, and learn of Jesus how to win souls for him.

But perhaps this sketch may be read by some who are still in the world and out of Christ. How can I wish you "a Happy New Year" without telling you where alone true happiness can be found? "The pleasures of sin are but for a season;" "at the Lord's right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Believe me, *that* life is not worth living which is not consecrated to Him "who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light."

"Father, I know that all my life
Is portioned out for me;
And the changes that are sure to come
I do not fear to see.
But I ask Thee for a patient mind,
Intent on pleasing Thee.

I ask Thee for a thoughtful love,
Through constant watching wise,
To meet the glad with joyful smiles,
And wipe the weeping eyes;
And a heart at leisure from itself
To soothe and sympathise."

HOW TO MAKE 1872 A HAPPY YEAR.

Everybody, with smiling face and hearty clasp of the hand, is wishing their friends "a Happy New Year." In this wish we cordially unite; but the question is—Does it lie in our power to make 1872 a happier year than that which is past recall?

Happily such questioning does not spring from the morbid sentiment which disappointed ambition or broken fortune so often awakens, but from the just emotion excited by wholesome meditation. Still there is danger that resolutions, however genuine, may spend themselves in vain regrets and desires. Human goodness is too much like the morning cloud and the early dew, which pass away. It is important, then, that generous impulses should at once assume method and activity.

To every one of conscientious thoughtfulness, there are points for improvement, in the motions of the heart and in the practices of the outward life. Some see that they have been of too hasty temper, or of too careless speech; others are painfully sensible of a growing worldliness, and the declension of the spirit of prayer or of religious zeal. To all such it has already occurred that they will make especial efforts to overcome these evils; they will reinforce themselves where weak, and diminish those dispositions which exert themselves too violently. This is right. He who wishes to be a better man must not yield himself to the seduction of a *general* progress, while he pays no attention whatever to his special sins or infirmities. How can a Christian presume to claim advancement for himself when he can show no sin subdued, no errors corrected, but his faults remain in full assertion, exposing him to self-condemnation and to the contempt of his companions? If one should spend a whole year in fighting a single evil of his nature, and at the end could feel himself victorious, happy would he be—for this alone would render the new year a notable one in his history.

But pity upon the man whose whole concern, amid the fresh desires awakened in his breast at this season, is only for himself! The very impulse which prompts one to seek personal improvement should incite generous yearnings for the welfare of his fellows. To make this year, then, a good one, the heart must expand with noble sympathies, the hand must be reached forth in noble charities. Something must be done which shall have an elevating effect upon the race—seen in the shape of wants relieved, tears wiped away, or sinners saved from the wrath to come.

It is incumbent upon us that we make the world better. Through our faith and labours, flowers should bloom where now are thorns, and scenes of sorrow and sin should glow with the brightness of Christian hope. To

accomplish such results, it will not do to spend the time in vague expectations of usefulness. Some people allow the most auspicious moments of life to pass away without accomplishing anything for God or man, because they sit down and lament their want of talents or influence; when if they would stir up the gift of God which was in them by doing something, they would be astonished in the end at their own endowments. There are those who never have a chance, as they are pleased to term it, to do any good. They are looking out for great opportunities, and can only consent to work on a grand scale; while if they would open their eyes and humble their hearts to men of low estate, they would find the opportunities too numerous and pressing for their capacity or resources.

To do good, we must be willing to do a *little* good. Others about us—and they have begun the year with the wish to render it increasingly useful—are discouraged by the very magnitude of their opportunities. So much meets them at every turn which must be done, that they shrink back overwhelmed at the vastness of the undertaking. These may fail equally with those who are visionary. One thing at a time—this is God's law. To but one leper was Elisha sent, though there were thousands in Syria. To relieve the want which is nearest to us, is the procedure which, when oft repeated, must render the doer the highest of benefactors. To him who thus seeks to build up his own soul in religion, and who strives successfully to benefit his fellow-men, this year will infallibly be a happy one.

HOMILY ON A MISUSED TEXT.

The opening words, "*Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord*," in Romans xii. 11, have sometimes been misunderstood. A person much engaged in worldly business has made them an excuse for not attending more to religion. "*Not slothful in business*" has thus become a favourite text with such a person, because he has taken it as a justification for giving his whole mind to the world.

But there are two things to be said in opposition to this view. First, we are not at liberty to separate one part of the word of God from another, taking this and leaving that. If a man is so ready to follow the words, "Not slothful in *business*," how can he think himself at liberty to neglect the words, "Fervent in spirit; serving the Lord"? Is not the one sentence as binding as the other? But secondly, the words, "Not slothful in business," do not mean exactly what such a person supposes. He takes the word "business" to mean a man's trade, or profession, or worldly calling, or perhaps the cares of a family, in the sense in which we generally use the word "business;" but it has not that meaning here; at least, if it includes those things, it includes a great deal besides. Indeed, the word "business" now hardly expresses the meaning of the original. The passage would better stand thus, "In diligence, or industry, not slothful;" the word being the very same as that in the eighth verse, "He that ruleth, with diligence." Now *diligence* applies not only to our worldly calling, but also to our spiritual concerns; and it is in this wide sense that the apostle uses the

word. The Christian is to be active, diligent, industrious in all things. "Whatsoever ye do," says the apostle elsewhere, "do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men." These words, then, are no justification for giving the mind to worldly business, to the neglect of the soul. On the contrary, they bid us be diligent in both; and we know well which must come, first: "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness."

The next words, "*Fervent in spirit*," contain a figure of speech, and a very expressive one. The word "fervent" is the word used in the original to express the glowing, bubbling heat of boiling water, or of molten metal. Water or metal in such a state is all warmth, and glow, and activity; and such in spirit should the Christian be. "Fervent in spirit" means full of life, and zeal, and ardour; it expresses a heart warmed with the love of God, burning with zeal in his cause, ardently desirous of his presence and blessing, filled with spiritual affections, devoted, earnest, active; the very opposite to all that is cold, formal, and slothful. Alas, how rare is such a spirit! How little is there of this burning zeal among those who bear the name of Christ! How great cause have even those who love him to lament their coldness of heart! These are quickening words.

The words, "*Serving the Lord*," show what ought to be the Christian's universal aim. He should consider himself as the Lord's servant, and try to do his will in all things. This will give a holy consistency to his life. Too often a sad inconsistency appears in the conduct of Christians. Under different circumstances, and in different company, they seem hardly the same persons. It would not be so if, under all circumstances and in all company, they set the Lord before them, and sought to serve him. A simple faith, a single eye, a constant sense of redeeming love, and a steady seeking to know and do the Lord's will,—he who has these will not be left to bring dishonour on the name he bears by a weak and wavering course. The Master whom he serves will himself guide and help him by the Spirit; and as his holy will is *complete* and *harmonious*, so will there be a likeness and unity in the life of him who sets himself to follow it.

Such a person will find no opposition or inconsistency between spiritual affections on the one hand and earthly duties on the other. "*Serving the Lord*" will reconcile "not slothful in business" with "fervent in spirit." Even taking the words, "Not slothful in business," in the narrowest sense, and confining them to worldly affairs (though, as we have seen, they are not so to be confined), even so the servant of the Lord, setting the Lord always before him, and seeking to do his will in all things, *will carry a spiritual mind into daily business*, and be not far in heart from God, even when necessarily engaged in the things of this life. It is not the truth, as so many suppose, that the duties of a man's calling need interfere with his attention to his soul's concerns. The merchant engaged in vast affairs, the statesman with a nation's welfare to attend to, the tradesman all day in his shop, the mechanic, the labourer, the servant busy from morning till night,—all these may be, and many such are, at the same time "fervent in spirit." A busy man may yet be a Christian man; an active and energetic person may at the same time be deeply spiritual. Nay, a consistent Christian must be diligent,—diligent in all things; for his time is a talent, and all his powers and

opportunities are talents, to be used for God, by those who are but his stewards of them all. An idle Christian would be a monstrous character.

Let us seek to catch the very spirit of the text. We serve a gracious Lord, who has redeemed us by his blood; let us serve him faithfully, lovingly, constantly. Let us seek to be at the same time warm in affection and diligent in conduct. Let us cultivate a spiritual mind, continually seeking for the fresh gift of the Holy Spirit in our hearts; and let us guard against sloth in things spiritual and things temporal, redeeming the time, seeking to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, and neglecting no opportuity of serving God or doing good to man.

Poet's Corner.

WATCHING FOR THE DAWN.

[Ps. cxxx. 6; Isa. xxi. 11.]

On the mountain one is watching
For the birth-hour of the light;
Whilst o'er the dreaming city
Is spread the veil of night.

"What seest thou, O watcher?"
Clouds fringed with hues of dawn:
Soon creation will sing carols
That another day is born.

So, piercing our leprous alleys,
Rays from the Gospel-sun
Creep into felons' hovels,
Where the Lord hath trophies won.

But are not those rays prophetic
Of that millennial day
When pariahs of all nations
To Christ shall tribute pay?

Then weary not with waiting,
O watcher for the morn;
For each streak of light fore-teacheth
Day will be of darkness born!

E. J. H.

EVENTIDE.

The stream is calmest when it nears the tide;
And flowers are sweetest at the eventide;
And birds most musical at close of day;
And saints divinest when they pass away.

Morning is lovely, but a holier charm
Lies folded close in Evening's robe of balm;
And weary man must ever love her best,
For morning calls to toil, but night to rest.

She comes from heaven, and on her wings doth bear
A holy fragrance, like the breath of prayer;
Footsteps of angels follow in her trace,
To shut the weary eyes of day in peace.

All things are hushed before her as she throws
O'er earth and sky her mantle of repose;
There is a calm, a beauty, and a power
That morning knows not, in the evening hour.

Until the evening we must weep and toil,
Plough life's stern furrow, dig the weary soil;
Tread, with sad feet, our rough and thorny way,
And bear the heat and burden of the day.

Oh, when our sun is setting, may we glide
Like summer evening down the golden tide,
And leave behind us, as we pass away,
Sweet, starry twilight round our sleeping clay.

ALFRED HOUGHTON.

Teachers' Column.

WHEN NOT TO USE OUR EYES.

"I MAKE a point of sometimes shutting my eyes," said Mr. Thorpe, the Superintendent of —— Ragged School, to Mr. Green, who superintended an adjoining one.

"You make a point of shutting your eyes!" exclaimed Mr. Green. "Why a Superintendent needs to be all eyes and ears; in fact, nothing should escape his attention."

"You misunderstand me," replied his friend. "What I mean is this, that there are times when it is better not to *appear* to notice; for instance, before the annual excursion the children are so excited that they do not pay very much attention to their lessons. Now would it not be better to *appear* not to see John Smith's fidgeting ways than to call out from the desk, 'John Smith, you are behaving badly, no treat for you'? for very likely John did not mean to be a bad boy, but his high spirits got the better of him. A Superintendent of some experience said to me, 'Instead of attempting to teach the scholars as usual on the Sunday before the excursion, I allow them to sing a number of their favourite hymns, for it is our duty to make allowances for natural excitement, and it will be much easier for them to be good if they are doing something themselves than if they are compelled to sit listening.' It strikes me, Mr. Green, that the old gentleman was right, and I will try the plan in our school."

"It strikes me, Mr. Thorpe, that *you* spoil the children; what I aim at is discipline, *strict* discipline, and if a scholar will not mind, why, he must leave the school; of course I am sorry, but we must make examples of a few for the sake of the rest."

"Decidedly we must, Mr. Green, if the conduct has been flagrantly bad; but we ought to remember that we have a rough set of young people to deal with who have never been accustomed to obey, so we must try and avoid telling them to do what we know will be repugnant to their feelings; for instance, I would

never say to great boys or girls, 'You must join a class composed of little ones,' for I am sure they would rebel; then when they have refused to be placed with young ones (many of whom would laugh at their elders' bad reading), what would you do next? you could not use a cane in a Sunday School."

"No, I would not use a cane, but if my scholars refused to obey me, I should dismiss them, at any rate for a time."

"If you tell a scholar that he is not to come to school for a few weeks, it is much the same as dismissing him, for it is a rare case for a boy or girl to come back after losing the habit of attending a Sunday School: and if you dismiss them altogether, what do you dismiss them to? Often, I fear, you dismiss them to ruin. A boy is expelled from school, Sunday comes, the father either goes out drinking or is half drunk from Saturday's debauch, the mother either is washing or gossiping. What is that great lad to do? He sits in his miserable home and wishes himself back in his class, but some companions come in and tell him not to be so stupid as to sit moping there, but to come out with them; he consents, and they go wandering in the parks or fields, then they turn into a public-house, and that is the beginning of the poor fellow's downward course, and perhaps from the time he was expelled from the Ragged School he never again hears the story of a Saviour's love. Oh! my dear friend, it is a great responsibility to turn away a scholar. Let us by all means be *firm* and make the children understand that we intend to be obeyed, but let us also mind what orders we give, and let us not dismiss a scholar unless it is absolutely necessary. Let us watch our own tempers, for when a Superintendent is very tired he often speaks unadvisedly with his lips. We have need to pray for the spirit of gentleness, for only by love will our rough scholars be trained, and become followers of Christ, who said, 'Learn of me, for I am *meek*.'" A. H.

TEACHER'S NEW YEAR'S COVENANT.

1. I promise to be in my place punctually every Sabbath at the time appointed, unless prevented by sickness, or some other cause so urgent that it would in like manner keep me from important worldly business.

2. I promise, in every such case of necessary absence, that I will use my utmost diligence to secure a suitable substitute, whom I will instruct in the character of the class, and the nature of the duties to be performed.

3. I promise to study carefully the lesson beforehand, and to have the subject in my mind during the week.

4. I promise, whenever a scholar is absent from the class on Sunday, that I will visit that scholar before the next Sabbath, unless prevented by sickness, or by some other hindrance so grave that it would, under like circumstances, keep me from attending to important worldly interests.

5. I promise to visit statedly *all* my scholars, that I may become acquainted with their families, their occupations, and modes of living and thinking, their temptations, their difficulties, and the various means of reaching their hearts and consciences.

6. I promise that, in secret prayer, I will pray distinctly, *by name*, for each one of my scholars,—for their conversion, if they are still out of Christ,—for their sanctification and growth in grace, if they are already converted.

7. I promise that I will seek an early opportunity of praying with each scholar privately, either at his house or mine, or in some other convenient place that may be found, and of asking him in a serious and affectionate manner to become a Christian.

8. I promise, when I have thus prayed and conversed with each scholar once

that I will begin and go through the class again, not omitting any, and not discontinuing my attempts, but going on faithfully, week by week, month by month, and year by year.—*Abridged from Pardee's "Sabbath School Index."*

Children's Gallery.

THE LITTLE SHEAF.

THE Norwegians have a pretty custom of fastening a little sheaf of wheat over the doors of their barns, at Christmas-time, every year, in order "that the little birds may have a happy Christmas." Every Christmas the old sheaf is taken down, and a fresh one put up.

Poor little cold Norwegian birds, with their nine months of winter, and deep snow, and long frosts, their short days and dark nights! It was a merciful idea. They, too, were to have a brightness at bright Christmas-time.

And now I want to know whether you have not some little work to do, for the benefit of others, at such a happy season?

We have met round our pleasant hearths, and kind looks and cheerful voices have wished us the Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Did we think of any little act by which we could help to cheer our poor neighbours? And if we have learned to know and love the Saviour, should we not do our utmost to make others share *this* joy with us?

See, then, before this winter passes away, whether you cannot do something. Even *children* may help to put out a "little sheaf," or do some kind act to cheer and brighten the life of others.

E.

WINTER GARDENS.

"THIS is almost my last nosegay from my dear garden," said a child, pressing close to his mother's side, with a bunch of flowers in his hand. "Oh, it seems but a little while since I planted the seeds, and watched, and watered, and weeded them; and what splendid flowers I had, and how I loved my garden, and how I was never tired of it: and now it's all over; this is my last nosegay. Oh, winter, winter, winter! it has no flowers, nothing beautiful; it is almost horrid."

"No, no, Albert; winter is not so horrid as you suppose; it can be made very pleasant. What do you think of a winter garden?"

"A conservatory, do you mean, with glass at the top and all round—a hot-house?"

"No; something far less costly than that. Every child can have a winter garden; but it will be necessary for you to work in it very diligently and carefully every day, for the weeds will, perhaps, be more forward and troublesome than they are in your summer garden; but, then, it will be sure to reward all your labours, and make you very happy. Would you not like to have a winter garden, my darling boy?"

"Yes, but would not the frost and the biting north winds hurt it?"

"Oh no; they could not do it the least harm."

"But where can it be?"

"Around your own fireside, certainly; and this is the way to make it.

"In the first place there must be the good ground of kind hearts and gentle dispositions. Then there must be the good seed of kind words and loving looks. Then there must be the young shoots of acts of love and deeds of kindness, upon which must fall the dews of

sympathy and the sunbeams of good humour. From these you will see springing the buds of happiness, the flowers of affection, and the fruits of holiness, which, if you carefully fence around with watchfulness, piety, and prayer, will make you a very pretty winter garden, which Jack Frost can never hurt and cold north winds never touch."

Will you not try to have a winter garden at your household hearth? I have seen many such a winter garden in the cottage homes and lordly halls of England, which have made them sunny spots all seasons through. But I have seen other homes where none ever sought to place them; and there it is winter all seasons through.

How shall it be in your house this winter? ELLA.

Editor's Note-book.

THOUGHTS FOR THE NEW YEAR.

THE old year has gone—gone for ever! We cannot recall one mis-spent moment! We cannot blot out one thoughtless or unhallowed word we have spoken. We cannot cancel any unkind action we have done. We cannot do any action left undone. How solemn the thought that the record of all our thoughts, words, and actions of the past year, and all previous years, is in God's "Book of remembrance."

Let us come, then, to our Heavenly Father, and pray that, for the sake of our blessed Redeemer, Jesus Christ, we may have all our sins blotted out. Let us pray that, during the New Year on which we are, by God's good providence, privileged to enter, time may be *well spent* by us.

Every day may we be seeking to do the will of "our Father which is in heaven;" then will it indeed be to us "a Happy New Year."

COVERED WITH WEEDS.

THEWALD thought it very unfair to influence a child's mind by inculcating any opinions before it should have come to years of discretion, and be able to choose for itself. I showed him my garden, and told him it was my botanic garden.

"How so?" said he, "it is covered with weeds.'

"Oh," I replied, "that is because it has not yet come to its age of discretion and choice. The weeds you see have taken the liberty to grow, and I thought it unfair in me to prejudice the soil in favour of roses and strawberries."—*Coleridge.*

LUTHER'S PRAYERS.

"I WAS once so fortunate to hear him pray. But, God help me, what a spirit! what faith was in his words! He prayed so devoutly as one who addressed God, and so full of hope and confidence as one who converses with his Father. My heart burned within me for joy that he could speak so devoutly and yet so familiarly with God: but especially that he so urged the promises in the psalms, as if assured that all must come to pass that he desired. In short, it appears that Luther did not make religion his God, but made God his religion. With him it was a life, a substance, a reality, and a truth. He acted as a man under the eye beam of an observing God and ever loving Parent; and thus incarnated the glorious text of the chief among the apostles, 'I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me.'"—*Veit Dietrich's Letter to Melancthon.*

RELIGION IN DAILY LIFE.

A RELIGION that does not take hold of the life that now is is like a cloud that does not rain. A cloud may roll in grandeur, and be an object of admiration, but if it does not rain it is of little account so far as utility is concerned. And a religion that consists in the observance of magnificent ceremonies, but that does not touch the duties of daily life, is a religion of show and of sham. —*H. W. Beecher.*

Correspondence.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

DESTITUTE CHILDREN'S DINNERS.

SIR,—As managers of the Destitute Children's Dinner Society—one of the most useful in this metropolis for relieving the necessities of the children of our poorest classes attending schools—we beg once again a small space in your columns to plead our cause. Formed early in 1867, this society was the means of giving, in that year, 16,822 good meat dinners to the children attending the various Ragged and other Schools in Westminster and Chelsea. In 1868, 83,119 dinners were given in thirty-seven dining-rooms in various poor districts in all parts of London. In 1869, the number given was increased to 110,803 in forty dining-rooms; and in 1870, fifty-eight dining-rooms were opened, and 147,858 dinners were given. In the season ending midsummer of last year, fifty-seven dining-rooms were opened, and 126,052 dinners were given under the same management, the diminished number being due to the smaller subscriptions, owing to the heavy sums sent to relieve the sufferers from the war. We were thus obliged to close our doors in spite of the murmurs of the thousands of young half-fed children still seeking our aid. This year, when the poor are already suffering from the high prices of provisions, we confidently appeal to the wealthy and benevolent to enable us not only to carry on our operations as heretofore, but to extend them to other equally poor districts, from which applications for aid are constantly coming before our working committee. At the present moment there are dining-rooms in full work, and the funds of the society are all quite exhausted.

The sum required to supply our dining-rooms properly is from £250 to £300 monthly. Our working expenses last year only amounted to £91 10s. 5d.

Subscriptions and donations will be thankfully received by the Treasurer, Hon. A. Kinnaird, M.P., 1, Pall Mall East, and Wm. Fuller, Esq., 111, Piccadilly; and also by the Secretary, Major Cooper Gardiner, 25, Grosvenor Mansions, Victoria Street, S.W.—We are, Sir, your obedient servants, SHAFTESBURY; EBURY; WM. COWPER TEMPLE; AR. KINNAIRD; A. P. STANLEY, Dean of Westminster; WM. CONWAY, Canon of Westminster.

Our Library Table.

Maggie and her Petticoat. Birmingham: Caswell.

We cordially recommend this little sketch by our valued contributor, "Ella." Like all her writings, it is instinct with the life which is in Christ. It is also free from the sensationalism now unhappily so popular, and hence most healthy in tone. To those who have read the pleasing tales which have graced our pages, we need not say that they are beautiful gems, well set.

Gems of Song Music. By G. T. Congreve. London: Stock.

This is a fitting companion to Mr. Congreve's "Gems of Song," now in its 150,000. No tunes are pitched in that minor key which, however fitted for church or chapel, are quite out of place in a Sunday School. What we want is life in the words, life in the music, in the hope that, by God's blessing, they may tend to bring life into the soul.

The Cottager and Artisan. London: Religious Tract Society.

This magazine is replete with tales and incidents which are well calculated to make our cottage homes happier. No expense is spared in the engravings, some of which are gems of art. Altogether it is a credit to a Society which has done so much to render "pure literature" popular with all classes of the community.

Facts and Scraps.

COTTAGE PLACE, WATERLOO ROAD.—On December 6th, the annual tea-meeting of the Mothers' Meeting and Band of Hope belonging to the above School was held. There was a large attendance of old and young. During the evening, Mr. Lewis, on behalf of the scholars, presented Mr. E. J. Hytche with a handsome rosewood inkstand and a tortoise-shell blotting-case. He said "that the children had for some time saved their farthings in order to testify their affection for Mr. Hytche, as Visiting Agent of the Ragged School Union."

A BIRMINGHAM PEABODY.—Mr. Josiah Mason is known as "the Birmingham Peabody." Besides Mr. Mason's endowment of the Erdington Orphanage, which with recent additions now amounts to the sum of nearly £400,000, he is about to establish a working-men's college and schools for instruction in science and technical subjects, which will be open, under formal restriction, to the humblest artisan. The endowment, it is understood, will be equal to that of the Orphanage, which was originally valued at about £300,000.

BIBLES.—In 1804 it was estimated there were 4,000,000 copies of the Bible in the world in about fifty different languages. Since that time, the Bible Society, by its own direct exertion, and by the indirect operation of the Bible upon the minds of others, stirring up their zeal in the good cause, it has been the instrument of effecting a multiplication of the Word of God to the extent of about 108,000,000 of copies of the Bible, and that not in fifty languages, but in some 250 different translations of the Scriptures, which it is now engaged in circulating from one end of the world to another.

The Ragged School Union has gladly aided in this good work by selling Bibles to local Ragged Schools. They cost 10d., but are supplied to the children for 6d. The number issued last year was 960, which, with those previously issued, makes a total of 37,160 copies of the complete Word of God sent to the homes of the very poor of London. Towards the cost the poor have paid £922, and the Committee of the Ragged School Union £620.

CHARITY ORGANISATION.—The metropolitan committees of the Charity Organisation Society have dealt with 936 cases, exclusive of non-resident applicants. During the four weeks ending November, 1871, 324 were dismissed, 283 were referred to legal and charitable agencies, and 329 were assisted by grants, loans, employments, &c.

EPPING FOREST.—Two important bills in connection with Epping Forest will be introduced into Parliament during the ensuing session. One, introduced by the Corporation of the City of London, seeks for powers to enable the Corporation to purchase all rights of the lords of the manors in Epping Forest, for the purpose of securing the forest for ever as a place of recreation for the public. The other, brought forward by the Commissioners of Works, seeks to enlarge the powers of the Epping Forest Commissioners, appointed under the Epping Forest Act of last session; to authorise the Commissioners to suspend all legal and other proceedings now pending or hereafter instituted respecting forestal rights, rights of common, enclosures of land, or any other matters to be inquired into by the Commissioners, until the expiration of the next session of Parliament, after they have made their final report; to enable them to make provisional orders for the management of the forest; to prevent enclosures, waste, or destruction of vert, herbage, trees, or shrubs in the forest; and to give them exclusive jurisdiction over all pending proceedings in law or equity relating to the forest.

HOMES FOR THE POOR.—Sound and healthful dwellings are required in towns for a lower class than have been yet thought of—the multitude who are unable to pay more than, say, a shilling a week as rent. There is a large number of these who require only one room—a man and his wife without children, single men and women, and widows. There seems no valid reason why a part of the Peabody Fund should not be applied to meet this want.—*Builder*.

HOME CHARITIES.—The *Echo* says—"We have sent nearly a million of money to foreign charities in less than two years, and so our own are likely to be neglected. Charity begins at home. We have done excellent work for foreign charities; let us see that we do not starve our own; we shall get quite as many thanks at home as we shall abroad, and, in addition, we shall see the results. As a rule, foreign nations do not understand us, and believe that our magnificent gifts are given with a political object. Filled beds in Chicago or Paris are not very well balanced by empty beds at Brompton."

READING-ROOMS. — The *Parochial Critic* understands that the reading-room at Columbia Market, to which the entrance is only a halfpenny, is now much resorted to by persons out of work, and others, to whom a daily glance at the papers is of great importance. We

wish that such reading-rooms could be multiplied over the metropolis. They would, we suspect, save many a pint which now too frequently follows a "look at the papers."

REFORMATORIES.—The Rev. Sydney Turner states, in his report for the year 1870, that the number of inmates in the Reformatory Schools of Great Britain was 4,315 boys and 1,118 girls. There were also 1,008 out on licence prior to discharge. He also reported that the ninety-one Certified Industrial Schools of Great Britain had, at the close of 1870, 6,211 boys and 2,069 girls. In addition there were also 230 boys and 95 girls out on licence. The admissions during that year amounted to 2,599, viz., 2,050 boys and 549 girls.

ROMANISM AND CRIME.—It is estimated that of the population of Liverpool one-fourth are Romanists. The proportions as regards crime are shown in a return recently presented at the Quarter Sessions by the Romish priest, Mr. Nugent, as to the number of commitments. These comprised:—Church of England members, 3,677; Romanists, 7,713; other denominations, 434. Allowing for the proportion as regards population, the Romanists produce seven times the number of criminals that are to be found among other creeds, or those who have no creed.

Notice of Meeting.

JUVENILE SABBATH UNION.

THE third annual meeting of the Juvenile Sabbath Union, formerly called the Juvenile Sunday Band, was held at the Memorial Hall, Church Street, under the presidency of the Rev. A. S. Herring. Mr. F. Clifton, the secretary, read the annual report, which stated that during the first two and a half years the mission existed under the title of the Sunday Rest Band, but as many objected to the title it was altered. It now numbered seventy-three branches, including several Ragged Schools, with 6,919 members, and several more branches were in course of formation. The guiding principle of the association was expressed in the third rule, that the members would abstain from buying, selling, or otherwise causing any unnecessary labour on the Lord's-day. The mission was entirely unsectarian, and all children who loved the Lord's-day, and sympathised with those who are doomed to toil on the Sabbath, with the consent of their parents were enrolled as members, and received the certificate of membership. The general benefit experienced by all schools that had adopted its principles was a better discipline, there being no fruit or sweets brought by the children to the hindrance of the lessons, and a larger attendance of scholars. The committee had issued 23,000 illustrated papers of hymns, entitled "The Sabbath Morn" and "God Bless our Sunday Band," 60,000 papers of the "Child's Petition, or Bring my Father Home," and 55,000 tracts and certificates, &c. Nearly the whole of the branches reported cases of much good being done by the children, especially in the homes where Sunday-buying had ceased. In one locality several costermongers had ceased taking out their barrows on Sundays, and through the persevering efforts of the children shops had been closed. A large number of meetings had been held by the branches, and a children's service had been held at St. James's, Clerkenwell, at which about 1200 children attended. The secretary was now giving lectures at various schools with a view to encourage the formation of branches, and these lectures were largely attended.

Papers, Original and Selected.

"BREAKERS AHEAD!"

ONE dark night a merchant vessel was nearing one of the magnificent coral reefs of Polynesia. Suddenly the passengers were startled by a cry of the man on the look-out, "Breakers ahead!" Oh, the agony of those aboard, who knew that there was but a plank between them and death. Ordinary seamanship would not have saved the goodly barque; but the captain, calm in heart as strong in head, sprang to the helm, and with a mighty effort the ship was sent flying back, every plank groaning with the strain. Soon the ship was guided into the lagoon, on the landward side of the reef, and both crew and cargo were saved.

But are there not moral breakers in our pathway which are equally dangerous, even if they are not so appalling? We think that observer to be very short-sighted who cannot discern some confronting the gallant social vessel named "RAGGED SCHOOL;" and which require a clear brain and a strong nerve if they are to be escaped. But, happily, we have the Strong One at our helm, and hence doubt not that we shall burst through the obstacles which threaten the wreck of our schools. As "forewarned is forearmed," we propose to notice some of those "breakers ahead" which confront our movement.

1. *Financial difficulty.*—In some quarters we regret to hear that there is a temptation to tighten the purse-strings, either because a school-rate is about to be levied, or because it is imagined that School Boards can accomplish our special mission.

Now we unhesitatingly affirm that no School Board can meet even the social and much less the spiritual needs of the class among whom we labour. As well might a physician prescribe for a patient by hearsay, without personally noting the symptoms, as for any body of men to imagine that they can elevate those lapsed classes, of whose real condition they are practically ignorant. This difficulty is increased by the fact that, as the waifs and strays of society have only known Government by the *baton* of the policeman or the cell of the jailer, they have no faith in any Government

plans for their social elevation. But in Ragged School teachers they have the utmost confidence. And why? Simply because they know, from many a year's experience, that these have both toiled and given, if haply they might raise them out of the "gutter." Again, as well might School Boards attempt to cope with sanitary evils as with moral or social ones. The specific office of the "Board of Works" is to look after the sanitary weal of the masses; of the School Board to initiate those who are still *outside* school influences into the three R's; and ours is to socialise and to save the wild tribes of our great cities. To think, then, that either can do a work for which they are not specially organised, is not only a mistake, but, as Chillingworth well said, "it is cousin-german to the impossible."

The same remark applies to the School-rate. Suppose the full rate is levied, which at present is improbable, it *cannot by law* exceed threepence in the pound; which, if a house be rated at £50, implies a tax of only twelve and sixpence per annum. Now this is but a fraction of the sum given by most Ragged School supporters to maintain the schools. But supposing that our Day and Night Schools were all absorbed by the School Board, it must not be forgotten that our large religious and social operations—exceeding 700—would still require a very large sum to carry them on, unless, indeed, we are willing to yield in this great moral crusade. Not that we anticipate such a mournful close of our thirty years' campaign; but rather we infer that, as social and religious work must be at a minimum in schools under the Board, our spiritual and social labours will be required more than ever. And we cannot doubt that the Church of Christ will be found, as in past years, equal to this great work.

Secularism.—The trail of this serpent can be traced everywhere in these last days. It dominates the press, and unhappily even some pulpits have not escaped its venom. This has led some modern philosophers to imagine that if "the three R's" are taught in childhood, crime will soon be numbered with the things which have passed away. They often point to the defective education of criminals to prove this. But the statements of prisoners as to educational acquirements are not to be relied on. For it should not be forgotten that many criminals openly boast, after leaving prison, how they deceived the chaplain as to their secular attainments, in order that they might pass part of the day in school, and thus

mitigate the rigour of confinement. When, in addition, we think of the other three R's, Redpath, Robson, and Roupell—all highly educated men—we see that the education which does not develop moral character is almost worthless.

Now such right development of character is a primary feature in Ragged Schools. Hence even when educational results have been but scanty, the social and moral ones have been very great. If, for example, we could point in our last number (*ante*, pp. 3 and 4) to the fact that Ragged Schools have "saved from the gutter" about a quarter of a million of social Pariahs, it was solely because the founders saw that youth must be regarded as heirs of eternity, if any lasting social good was to be wrought. The secular, then, was preceded—not merely supplemented—by the spiritual, and countless thousands now sit at the feet of Jesus, "clothed, and in their right mind." If, then, we should be eventually relieved of secular instruction, our utmost energies will still be taxed to teach our wild tribes their duty to God and man.

A sectarian spirit.—By this we do not refer to "Denominationalism." For, as Ragged School managers and teachers are drawn from every branch of the One Church, they are too busy with God's work to waste their energies in discussing questions connected with Church polity or ritual. They have, doubtless, their own views on those subjects; but they find a common platform for common work in the love of souls kindled by the same love of Christ; so that they practically re-echo the words of Augustine—"In things essential, unity; in things doubtful, liberty; in all things, charity!"

Yet it must be remembered that there can be a sectarian spirit even when denominational distinctions are altogether tabooed. This is shown when absorbed by our special sphere of labour we care not for the work of the church generally; or when, forgetting that we are members of a great corporation, we think of and pray only for our own Ragged School. In a crisis like this there is a great liability to this feeling; whereas every effort should be made, not simply to save that school to which we are attached, but to strengthen the whole movement. In this, after all, we shall but comply with the Divine injunction (2 Phil. iv.), "Look not every man on his own things, but every man *also* on the things of others." Thus will a sectarian spirit be avoided; self will be subordinated to God's work; and, as each will pray for all, all will labour in spirit

with each, and thus the whole movement will be placed on a foundation not to be shaken.

Only working for time.—It is a poor thing to work only for time, for it has been well said that "he who works only for time really labours only for the praise of men who die whilst they utter it." But he who works for eternity is labouring for God. Hence, when the world's heroes and poets are forgotten, the honest Christian teacher will be enrolled among God's heroes; for their works "do follow them" into the eternal city to be as a halo of glory for ever.

We refer to this breaker ahead because, in a secular age, the spirit of which more or less taints every one, it is well to guard against lowering our work to mere moral or social reform. We may gladly point to our Penny Banks and our Clothing Clubs, and the great social results they have effected; but, were this all, what should we have done to save myriads from the agony of passing eternity in sight of, but out of glory (Luke xvi. 23)? Salvation of souls, then—not merely social reform—must still be our primary object; and we doubt not that, as the acorn contains the oak, it will be found that the greater included the lesser; and thus, whether we intend it or not, a work for God will be found in the sequel to be equally a work for man.

Doubts of success.—Probably nothing so much dwarfs Christian labour as any doubt about its ultimate success. Such persons are but modern illustrations of the statement of the apostle to the Jews (James i. 7, 8): "A doubtful man is unstable in all his ways; for let not that man think that he shall receive anything from God." No; those are the men whose labours are tracked by success as by its very shadow, who adopt the motto of that prince of missionaries, Dr. Carey, "*Attempt* great things for God—EXPECT great things from God!"

Probably there was never an age when *quiet waiting* on God's promises and purposes was so rare. It is an age of gigantic successes so far as material prosperity and wealth are concerned. This necessarily reacts on the religious world; and many are prone to consider that if Christian success is not vouchsafed it is a sign that they were never called into the vineyard. Now such fruitage may not be revealed till we enter the eternal world—like the seed buried in the Great Pyramid, which was lost to human sight for nigh four thousand years, but which, when sown in modern

days, was found to be as richly productive as in the days of Pharaoh. That time will assuredly come, if not in this world, then at the hour when every man will "receive his penny," namely, at that day of days when the Lord of the harvest will come to "reckon with his labourers." Till then true faith will work, with or without a present harvest, knowing that a day will dawn when "sower and reaper will rejoice together!"

In this glance at some of the breakers ahead which endanger Ragged Schools, we think sufficient has been incidentally noted to indicate that there is no call for us to haul our flag down. One who "neither slumbers nor sleeps," we doubt not, is watching over us as much now as He did when heroic men and women first invaded the dens and hovels of our great cities. We believe, then, that if we are faithful to Christ, our Father will guide us safely through the present crisis; nay, that we shall be even more fruitful than in the days that have past. Our work is not yet accomplished; there are still thousands of moral wrecks around us; facts tell powerfully that nothing but the love of Christ, published by loving hearts, can meet their spiritual or social needs; and we believe that, in spite of the breakers ahead, or, in other words, the rocks sunk by the great enemy, our vessel will ride safely through the gathering storm. For we may well, as we glance at the past and the future, echo the dying words of John Wesley, "The best of all, God is for us!"

RAGGED SCHOOLS AND THE LONDON SCHOOL BOARD.

In the *Daily Telegraph* of January 3, appeared the following attack on Ragged Schools:—

To the Editor of the "Daily Telegraph."

Sir,—As your paper is the chief medium of inter-communication between the ratepayers of the metropolis, will you permit me by means of it to call their attention to a matter considerably affecting their interests? The London School Board has just issued a notice urging parents to send their children to efficient schools, and hinting plainly that, unless the present efficient schools be filled, it will have to enforce compulsion. Now, during the past year all the Ragged Schools of London have been examined by Government inspectors, and with scarcely an exception have been condemned as inefficient. The larger schools have since been taken up by the School Board, and made efficient, or are making themselves so, and departing from the ragged-school system; the smaller ones have been rejected as not worth having even as a gift, because they could not be made efficient.

These latter, therefore, will henceforth be the only schools in connection with the Ragged School Union. Are they to be kept open? Will they not serve as a trap to parents, and be an obstacle to the efforts of the School Board? The movements of that body are already slow enough in all conscience, and I am sure no lover of education can wish to retard them still further.

But consider this as a ratepayers' question. If the present existing efficient schools—the National, British and Foreign, and the School Board Schools—cannot be filled, the Board will have to enforce compulsion, and it has been computed that compulsion will cost the ratepayers of London £70,000 or £80,000 per annum, every penny of which can be saved if the working classes will send their children to efficient schools without being made to do so. The Board is naturally reluctant to burden the ratepayers to this large extent if it can possibly avoid it; and they themselves can help the Board, and save their own pockets, by procuring the transfer of the scholars of ragged schools to other schools which are efficient. There is room for them all in existing efficient schools, and, unless these are filled, we shall be asked for a fresh rate to defray the cost of compulsion. Why, then, not close the remaining ragged schools? Surely, it would be suicidal in London ratepayers to continue to support them, for it would be helping to lay increased rates on their own shoulders. Let me put the case in a concrete form. A. B., a ratepayer, subscribes ten shillings to a ragged school educating a hundred children, while there is room for the whole number in the surrounding efficient schools. The School Board is unable to fill these schools, and resorts to compulsion. Consequently A. B. has to pay ten shillings more in the shape of a rate. So because he has paid one ten shillings, he has to pay another; whereas, if he had withheld his first, he might not have been mulcted by the School Board of his second. I enclose my card, and remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

London, Jan. 5. ONERIBUS OPPRESSUS.

To this unwarrantable criticism, the Secretary of the Ragged School replied in the following letter, which appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* of January 13th.

To the Editor of the "Daily Telegraph."

SIR,—My attention has been called to a letter in the *Daily Telegraph*, signed by "Oneribus Oppressus," which reflects on the usefulness of ragged schools, and speaks of them as an obstacle to the efforts of the School Board. It is satisfactory to know that such is not the opinion of the School Board; for, as far as that opinion has been expressed, the reverse is the case. At a conference of a large number of the members of the School Board for London with the committee of the Ragged School Union, those members not only spoke highly of the usefulness of the schools, but urged the committee to use all its influence to prevent any relaxation of efforts to maintain them. Soon after this conference the Clerk of the Board wrote to the committee to say: "The Board think it most important that subscriptions should not suddenly cease, and the schools be closed before they are in a position to consider the question of adopting, or not, the schools which

the managers may wish to place under their charge." Lord Lawrence also stated: "Should the subscribers relax their efforts, these schools will be in danger of dwindling away or perishing altogether. I should, therefore, be glad if you would kindly urge those whose voluntary exertions have hitherto supported these schools, not to desist from their labours. This subject is of great importance."

Since the foregoing was penned, the inspectors from the Government have examined many, if not all, the ragged schools in London, and although we do not yet possess the report of those inspectors, we do know that very many of the schools were approved, not only as useful, but meritorious. As a rule the teachers have not been certificated, but at the request, and by the help, of the inspectors, fifteen of the teachers sat last month for the certificate; eighteen others were also urgently requested to sit, but for the present decline. Others have secured their third class certificates, but of course not till after all their schools had been inspected and approved. In the autumn of last year the Society's inspectors examined the scholars in ragged schools, not classifying them by age as was done most unadvisedly by the Government inspectors, but according to the progress made during school attendance. Those gentlemen examined 11,445 children out of 19,309 in attendance, and the result was that 4,782 passed in reading; 5,839 in writing; 2,777 in dictation-spelling; and in arithmetic, 5,286 in addition; 3,479 in addition and subtraction; 2,350 in addition, subtraction, and multiplication; and 1,580 in the four rules; 2,438 passed in multiplication table; 3,129 in notation of three figures; and 1,915 in four figures. It must be borne in mind that these results have been worked out among a class of children that was ignored by the State, and for whose education no provision was made till Sunday-school teachers and London City missionaries some thirty years since inaugurated the ragged school movement. Since their establishment some 500,000 children of the poorest and most neglected classes have been scholars in them, and by means of these schools have been fitted for useful positions in society. Registers are kept in many of the schools for helping the children into situations, and it is estimated that one-half of the scholars have in this way been aided to earn self-support by self-effort. To encourage these pupil-servants in this new course, small annual prizes have been offered to those who, coming within certain rules, have served the employer for at least twelve months with good character. In eighteen years 10,962 of those prizes have been awarded, in addition to which, 13,570 young persons have become soldiers, sailors, and emigrants.

Lord Morley, in the House of Lords, last July, made a statement that went to show that during the many years ragged schools have been in operation, some great ameliorating influences had been working among the lowest sections of society. He stated that in 1843, when the population was 16,300,000, the criminals sentenced to penal servitude or transportation amounted to 4,488; but that in 1869, when transportation was at an end, and when the population was increased to 21,900,000, the number of criminals sentenced to penal servitude was reduced to 2,006. His lordship added, "he believed that the facilities for detecting crime, increased education, and the ragged schools, in which the noble Earl of Shaftesbury took so much

interest, had, to an immense extent, repressed crime in this country." "Oneribus Oppressus" seems, by his letter, to have the impression that ragged schools are *rival* institutions to the other elementary schools of the country. Nothing can be more foreign to their object and aim. They may be *feeding* schools in the twofold sense of supplying food to the starving, and sending scholars, when improved, to schools of a higher order. Hitherto reference has been made chiefly to the secular and social results worked out by ragged schools, and which are, I think, sufficient to induce "Oneribus Oppressus" to reconsider his conclusions, and no longer to speak of institutions working out such happy results as "traps to parents" and "obstacles to school boards."

Instead of the School Board being advised to shut up ragged schools, and that, too, before they have put up a single building, would it not be in better keeping to induce the School Board to get under instruction in existing schools the 10,000 street children referred to by Mr. John MacGregor, and still better the 100,000 children said, by the Diocesan Board of Education, to be in London neglected, and growing up pests to society? The secular and social results of ragged schools, great as they are, are not the greatest object aimed at. These are mission institutions, and their mission is not attained until a knowledge of the Bible is attained. In this respect great results have followed from the teaching of God's truth from God's own Word. Large numbers of the teachers are now giving their time and labour, without fee of any kind, to train their successors in the schools in the knowledge and love of God, and to discharge their duty in that station of life to which it may please God to call them.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant.

1, *Exeter Hall, W.C.* JOSEPH G. GENT.

SHILLING HOMES FOR THE KENT STREET POOR.

BY REV. J. AMOS, M.A.

IN the exceptionally large poor neighbourhood in and about Kent Street, a plan under the above title has been at work for nearly two years. The idea was, to take some of the ordinary homes in which the people live, to show what could be made out of them, and to place elderly people in each room, who might find an agreeable refuge for themselves and at the same time keep up a useful example of a cleaner and more wholesome life before their neighbours; each room—in a thorough state of repair, and economically furnished—being let to an aged couple, or to a widow, at the low rate of one shilling a week. The miserable latter days of some respectable poor creatures, being thus greatly cheered, who have lived too long entirely to make their own way with any comfort, but who recoil from the seclusion, the restraints, and the company of the workhouse life. At the close of last year two "Shilling Homes" had been started, and very much encouraged by three gentlemen very liberally providing, for the ensuing year, fifteen pounds each (the current yearly expense for a house fairly kept up); a third house has been added, while some contributions which have been kindly made in furtherance of this object have gone towards the furnishing of the ew house, which has cost about twenty pounds, or five pounds a room. In

different parts of the neighbourhood there are now three of these homes, in which together there are twelve rooms, where accommodation is provided for six aged couples and six widows. Independent of the insensible influence that these well-ordered places and well-ordered people have had upon the multitudes outside, the evident kindness of this particular plan has done wonders in winning upon the hearts of everybody about. The very kind and liberal way in which the idea of the Shilling Homes has been taken up has put the entire plan into such a position that it will only require to be maintained. It is hoped that such assistance as is necessary may be kindly given, and so readily as not to encroach upon the clergyman's time in casting about for help. The conditions under which these single rooms can be obtained, even in our large neighbourhood, make three homes perhaps a fair supply. We require aged people of good character, without children living with them; not too badly off, so as to have no possible means of livelihood at all, nor too well off, so as not to require such a provision.

It might be possible, however, to work out a little further the idea of the "Shilling Homes" in a slightly different direction. In some of our worst back streets a block of five or six houses might be taken from the ground landlord at a moderate rent for the whole, and by the year, and let again by us to tenants upon whom we can depend, at a weekly rent, greatly reduced from the ordinary rent now usual, but which would meet current expenses. The object would be, not only to assist some fifty poor families, who are crushed by a rent out of all proportion to their means, but also—with the double advantage of having a fair rent to pay, and having to deal with one whom they know—to distribute more equally some of the better elements of our parish, so as to dispute the ground which is liable here and there to be wholly occupied by the worst characters, with little good to themselves, and to the utmost disadvantage of the entire neighbourhood. With the very particular knowledge which we have of the individual character of the entire population, a plan of this kind might be attempted with good hopes of important results in some half-a-dozen ways. I do not think, in the dilapidated state in which the houses in the least favourable parts of Kent Street are in, and in which state we could only get them cheaply, that much could be well done, without something being attempted to start with, in the way of repairs, or that it would be desirable to move in this direction until at least a block of some five or six houses could be taken. Upon an average a house could be put into fair order at a rate of five pounds. Before making a start here, it would be better to wait till about five-and-twenty pounds was accumulated. If this project should find sufficient favour, that it could be attempted, it is thought that two rooms should always be necessarily taken together for a family, but that still each room, in the cases of widows with children, might be let, though unfurnished, at the rate of one shilling a week, and perhaps in no case would it be necessary to exceed half-a-crown a week for the two rooms. The extraordinary knowledge we have now of the poor of Kent Street, and the singular influence we possess generally in the neighbourhood, would with a little help encourage us to attempt this plan—aiming at one blow practically to perform an extensive continuous charity, with not impossible large moral results to families and to the neighbourhood,

and certainly at a pecuniary cost comparatively very small. If from our living on the spot, and from our daily intercourse with our parishioners, any arrangements should be hit upon for the improvement of the people and of their dwellings, without quite ignoring some return for the value of property, I have much reason to believe that the many landlords about us would favourably consider for their own guidance any steps which may seem fairly to tend in this direction.

The miserable state of the dwellings of the poor, and the disproportionately heavy rents which they have to pay, for even the wretched accommodation they obtain, is a most serious and very obvious burden upon those classes of society who are struggling very hard for a scanty livelihood. To ameliorate their condition in this respect will be a kindness which will be well understood, and be calculated, by the blessing of God, to remove some of the secret hindrances to the spread of the Gospel, by neutralising, in some measure, the terrible influence of bad example, and practising the happiness and purity of domestic life.

St. Stephen's, Kent Street, Southwark.

JACOB'S ISLAND RAGGED SCHOOL, BERMONDSEY.

About a quarter of a century ago society was startled by Charles Dickens's sketch of a London "crime garden." So little was then known of the haunts of crime, that many believed the facts to be exaggerated, whilst a City magistrate denied on the bench that there was even such a place as "Jacob's Island." To this denial, the offspring of culpable ignorance to one in his position, the great writer only replied "Come and see." The invitation was not accepted by his antagonist, but it was by the pioneers of Ragged Schools—men and women who really believed that Christ died to save our social outlaws as much as those who have never violated the laws of man.

The following is the picture of Jacob's Island, which, to those who remember the place as it *was*, reads more like a photograph than a pen and ink sketch. The great author thus depicts Jacob's Island and its unsavoury surroundings in the fiftieth chapter of "Oliver Twist." He says that—

"Near to the part of the Thames on which the church of Rotherhithe abuts, where the buildings on the banks are dirtiest, and the vessels on the river blackest, with the dust of colliers and the smoke of close-built, low-roofed houses, there exists, at the present day, the filthiest, the strangest, the most extraordinary of the many localities that are hidden in London, wholly unknown, even by name, to the great mass of the inhabitants.

To reach this place the visitor has to penetrate through a maze of close, narrow, and muddy streets, thronged by the roughest and poorest of water-side people, and devoted to the traffic they may be supposed to occasion.

The cheapest and least delicate provisions are heaped in the shops; the coarsest and commonest articles of wearing apparel dangle at the salesman's door, and stream from the house-parapet and windows.

Jostling with the unemployed labourers of the lowest class, ballast-heavers, coal-whippers, brazen women, ragged children, and the very raff and refuse of the river, he makes his way with difficulty along, assailed by offensive sights and smells from the narrow alleys which branch off from the right and the left, and deafened by the clash of ponderous waggons that bear great piles of merchandise from the stacks of warehouses that rise from every corner.

Arriving at length in streets remote and less frequented than those through which he had passed, he walks beneath tottering house-fronts, projecting over the pavement, dismantled walls that seem to totter as he passes, chimneys half-crushed, half-hesitating to fall, windows guarded by rusty iron bars that time and dirt have almost eaten away, and every imaginable sign of desolation and neglect.

In such a thoroughfare, beyond Dockhead, in the Borough of Southwark, stands Jacob's Island, surrounded by a muddy ditch, six or eight feet deep, and fifteen or twenty feet wide, when the tide is in; once called Mill Pond, but known in these days as Folly Ditch. It is a creek or inlet from the Thames, and can always be filled at high water, by opening the sluices at the Lead Mills, from which it took its old name. At such times, a stranger looking from one of the wooden bridges thrown across it at Mill Lane, will see the inhabitants of the houses on either side lowering, from their back-doors and windows, buckets, pails, domestic utensils of all kinds, in which to haul the water up; and when his eye is turned from these operations to the houses themselves, his utmost astonishment will be excited by the scene before him. Crazy wooden galleries, common to the back of half-a-dozen houses, with holes from which to hook up the slime beneath; windows broken and patched, with poles thrust out on which to dry the linen which is never there; rooms so small, so filthy, so confined, that the air would seem too tainted even for the dirt and squalor which they shelter; wooden chambers thrusting themselves out above the mud, and threatening to fall into it—as some have done; dirt-besmeared walls and decaying foundations; every repulsive lineament of poverty; every loathsome indication of filth, rot, and garbage; all these ornament the banks of Folly Ditch.

In Jacob's Island, the warehouses are roofless and empty; the walls are crumbling down; the windows are windows no more; the doors are falling into the streets; the chimneys are blackened, but they yield no smoke. Thirty or forty years ago, before losses and Chancery suits came upon it, it was a thriving place; but now it is a desolate island indeed.

The houses have no owners, they are broken open and entered upon by those who have the courage; and there they live, and there they die. They must have powerful motives for a secret residence, or be reduced to a destitute condition indeed, who seek refuge in Jacob's Island."

Such a picture could not but lead to some improvement in the sanitary condition of Jacob's Island; and though there are still squalid courts and slatternly women, the picture would scarcely be recognised, so great has been the alteration. The foul ditch, a creek of the Thames, has been filled up, and no longer pollutes soul and body. Huge warehouses have replaced the hovels of burglars; prominent among these is the large factory of Peak,

Frean, and Co., who employ many boys and girls belonging to the Ragged Schools of the district. The poor no longer drink the filthy, unfiltered creek-water, for most houses have the water laid on; though the less that is said about the state of the water butts the better. As might have been expected, the moral aspect of Jacob's Island has so changed that the Bill Sikeses would scarcely choose it now for a place of refuge.

Among other causes of this great sanitary and social improvement, one is prominent—namely, the opening of a Ragged School, in 1855, a few yards from Bill Sikes's house. From the first, aided solely by volunteers and the vicar of Christchurch, it has been conducted by a city missionary and a gentleman engaged in the city, who, after seventeen years' continuous labour, show as much zeal as when they began their arduous undertaking.

The history and progress of the Jacob's Island Ragged School is thus reported in the *City Mission Magazine* by the founder. He says that—

"In the year 1855 I was permitted to commence what has certainly been a great blessing to the district, as well as a further means of ready access to the people, namely, a Ragged School. There was great need for such an institution. Numbers of poor children who ought to have been at a day school were sent to work or allowed to run about the street and early to learn to become adepts in vice. One instance may suffice to show the deplorable vice into which some of the younger portion of the population of this district were sunken. For some time a party of some half-dozen boys and girls, of the ages of fifteen or sixteen, have been in the habit of going out at night to steal, after which they have returned with their booty, got through the window of an unoccupied house, made a fire and spent the night together enjoying their ill-gotten gains away from home. Their practices and place of retreat were at last discovered by the police, and the consequence is that several of them suffered the penalty of the law in prison. The St. Saviour's Dock adjoining the district was also much infested with petty thieves. These and other circumstances rendered it very desirable that something should be attempted for this class of children.

An evening Ragged School seemed to be best calculated to lay hold of them and do them good, and on Monday, October 8th, 1855, the school was opened. The first night we got forty-four boys and girls. This number soon increased to sixty, and after a while to eighty. We had the place painted and the gas laid on, and for a time we went on tolerably well. But the new gas-fittings and the new globes were things too tempting for the thievish propensities of those whom we wished to benefit. One night the place was broken into, and all the gas-fittings and globes carried off, notwithstanding that a family slept up-stairs. This was a slight check to our progress, and rather annoying, but we were not to be beaten in this way. We soon replaced the gas-fittings minus the globes, made the place a little more secure, and started afresh. We obtained teachers and went on with the work, giving the Scriptures the prominent place in our teaching.

Soon after this, in the very same year, we were obliged to leave our school-room in Jacob Street on account of its dilapidated condition. On one occasion when the children and teachers were present, an old unoccupied building adjoining it came down with a startling crash, and we all, under the

apprehension that our school-room was coming down with it, rushed to the door, but fortunately no injury was done to any of us; the school-room itself remained intact, though it was left in an unsafe condition. It was shortly afterwards condemned and pulled down. We had therefore to seek new quarters. After a search through the district, I found rooms in what had formerly been a gentleman's mansion, situate in George Row. We engaged three rooms, the largest of which would accommodate about eighty children.

In addition to Sundays the school is open four evenings in the week, two for boys and two for girls. For some years its average attendance has been over a hundred, including boys and girls. The number on the books is more than three times that.

Some thousands of children have been instructed in the school and derived permanent benefit in reading and writing, and what is still better, have received decided spiritual good. A considerable portion of the rising population of the district have, in fact, now passed through the school, many of whom are now married and have children. Their remembrance of the school gives me a hold over them which I should not otherwise have had.

Great numbers of the scholars have been led to purchase Bibles, hymn-books, and other good books.

A clothing-club has for many years been established, and the children have seldom deposited, for articles of clothing and shoes, less than £20 annually. This has greatly contributed to their comfort and improved appearance, and induced saving habits among them."

Like the managers of every Ragged School, the teachers of this school can refer to much tangible fruit, but probably not a tithe is known of the good which will be revealed by-and-by. Two or three cases of spiritual good which show this will fitly close this sketch of Jacob's Island Ragged School:—

The superintendent met a young woman in the district one day as she was returning from her situation as domestic servant. She said she wished to thank the teachers of the school for the instruction she had received. She had not only learned to read and write, but she had been led through that instruction to read and love the Word of God, to love His house, and attend it regularly, and to care for her soul. This young woman, who is married, resides in the district, and gives every sign that a real work of grace is going on in her soul.

A youth also residing in the district, who had long been in this Ragged School, gave his heart to God, and was united to a Christian Church. Only the other week he said, "My first religious impressions were received in your Ragged School, and though I did not yield to them at the time, I never forgot them." He is a member of a Wesleyan Chapel in Rotherhithe.

Another case is that of a young man who is now a teacher in this Sunday School. He is a Church member, and is a very devoted and exemplary teacher, and attributes all the good he has received, and the happy decision he has made in life, to the teaching in this school; and in becoming a teacher he expressed a desire to do good in the very school where he had received so much good.

Other cases of a similar nature might be mentioned, which would tend to

show the salutary influence Jacob's Island School is exercising upon the young of the district, especially upon that class for which Ragged Schools were established.

SUNDAY NIGHT IN A THEATRE.

Not to witness a dramatic performance, but to note the mode of conducting a religious service within walls used generally for a very different purpose, and to observe its effect on those present, was our object in visiting such a place and on such a day. It is perhaps necessary that we should explain this at the outset, to prevent any highly sensitive reader from at once determining not to read this column.

The theatre (now called the Royal Victoria Palace) we visited is, perhaps, peculiar in its surroundings. It is in the very midst of one of the worst parts of London. There are spots of deeper wretchedness, of more abject squalor, of more defiant lawlessness, perhaps, but there are few which can compare with it in being, as it were, a combination of all the bad qualities of bad neighbourhoods without possessing the possible extenuation of supposed absolute necessity. The wretchedness is of the self-made type, the squalor is that of laziness and neglect, and the lawlessness is that of sheer wantonness and a love of misrule. People live about there who are wretched because they take a morbid delight in the position—they won't raise themselves, nor even try to raise themselves, from the dead level. They are squalid and lawless, because those qualities are suited to their mental ideas, or rather want of idea; and they flock together as kindred spirits do under better circumstances. We will consider the district as bounded on the west and east by the roads leading to the bridges of Westminster and Blackfriars respectively. Its main artery from the western side has the euphonious name of the "New-cut."

At the entrance of the New-cut we found ourselves on a Sunday evening. On each side was a showy gin-palace, with a plentiful display of glass, gas, gilt, and decoration of the most alluring nature. These were thronged within by those who had money, and scowled upon from without by those who, suffering from impecuniosity, darted savage glances now at the palace they could not enter, and anon at any passing stranger who was supposed from his dress and outward appearance to be possessed of the money which they were anxious to obtain to gratify their cravings. Passing on, the supply of light which fairly placed the street lamps in the shade indicated open fruit shops, tobacconists, lesser public-houses, and the marts of the vendors of pies of highly doubtful composition.

Again we emerged into a main road, and saw before us the theatre. A stranger wishing to find his way there will be more readily directed if he asks for "the Vic." On the playbills it bears the name of our most gracious Sovereign. There was an announcement outside that there would be service at seven, and a very few persons were awaiting the opening of the doors. At an adjoining opening a group of young men in the usual costume of London costermongers were singing a hymn, listened to by a small crowd and keenly watched by a helmeted policeman. It was drizzling with rain,

but they kept on their work, standing bareheaded, and their apparent earnestness appeared to impress their hearers, for they, too, stood and listened despite the cold drops fast falling, until the time came for adjournment to an adjoining mission-hall belonging to a tradesman of the neighbourhood.

The theatre doors were soon opened, and we passed with the crowd to the "first circle;" the "pit" was tolerably full, and the "boxes" likewise. The gallery contained but a few. On the stage was a table, a few chairs, and a harmonium, backed by some gas-lights in the form of the letter T. There was a strong smell of oranges, and not a few of the audience had brought with them a supply of that fruit. We should mention that on entry each person was supplied with a copy of the hymns to be sung. The time for commencement having arrived, a gentleman came forward and gave out "The Third Hymn," for the benefit of those who had books. This, however, happened to be but a very small portion of the audience, and, accordingly, although the hymn was started to a popular song tune, ground out daily on the barrel organs of London, very few joined at first. Some of the younger members of the audience, however, soon made up for the weakness of the commencement, by their vigour in joining in the latter verses. Judging, however, from those near us, the words they sung would not be found in "The Third Hymn."

After this hymn, four or five men entered, one of whom offered a short prayer, standing, and another hymn (this time from the printed paper) was sung to the tune of the National Anthem. This was quite a success, for all knew both words and tune, and right heartily did they sing. After this there was anything but quietness, and the conductor of the service came forward and said, "Before I begin this service, I would remark that there appears to be some one present who desires to interrupt our proceedings." A voice from the gallery responded, "Yes, that's right, there's half-a-dozen of us." Conductor: "I thought so. Well, I'm not one of the sort to stand this, so you had better go out. I shall wait until you have gone, and then I'll begin the service." Thereupon the conductor sat down at his table, and with characteristic cowardice the would-be interrupters took their departure without another word, by contenting themselves with jumping noisily over the seats. The conductor then arose, and expressed a wish that those who had left might be placed under the Education Act, and that no doubt there would be a better meeting that night, as the devil had interrupted them at the beginning.

The service which then followed consisted of a reading of the 23rd Psalm, with some very wide and discursive commentaries thereon, no doubt intended to meet the capacity of the audience, the singing of some hymns, the narration of some instructive anecdotes, which were listened to with eager attention, and the offering of some short prayers. This was managed with some tact so as to ensure a constant succession of breaks in the service, and the whole was accordingly ended before it became tedious; and although the style of service and the manner of conducting it would be fairly open to criticism if emanating from other quarters, yet as the conductor declared himself to be but a commercial man, and only able to do the best his powers

allowed, we must say nothing further. Certain it is that a clear powerful voice, and an earnest energetic manner, together with an evident knowledge of the minds and habits of the audience, enabled him to obtain an amount of attention which many more learned than he would have entirely failed in securing.

We made very careful observations, and also a number of inquiries, and are quite convinced that those who attended the service would not have gone to a regular church or chapel. The bread was "cast on the waters," God grant that it may be "found," if even "after many days!" After the service was ended an invitation was given to those present to join in a meeting for united prayer, and it must be admitted that the services have not been ineffectual when we mention that a large number of those present availed themselves of the invitation. Passing again to the tavern-lit streets, we found them thronged with crowds of such a character that convinced us that verily there are many heathens even in the midst of our boasted civilisation.—*The Rock*.

"GASHMU SAITH IT."

And who is Gashmu? Why, simply an Arab railer, a confederate of Sanballat and Tobiah, who, having failed to scoff down the work of God, now tries to slander his workmen out of existence (Nehemiah ii. 19; vi. 1, 6).

And who is Gashmu talking about? Why Nehemiah, to be sure, who could not abide in a Persian palace while Jerusalem lay waste; and who, after days and nights of sadness, tears, and prayers, had been prospered of the Lord and permitted to come to Jerusalem and repair its desolations.

And what is Gashmu troubled about? The desolations of Zion? The ruins of the Temple? The captivity of Israel? Oh, no, none of these. But he sees some one else trying to do something for God, and he wants to hinder it all he can.

How did Gashmu go at it? Did he go and see Nehemiah and talk with him about his work? Did he investigate the character of his undertaking? Did he confer with those best acquainted with the matter? Oh, no, these these things were not in Gashmu's line of business.

But first he, with Sanballat and Tobiah, clubbed together and laughed, and scorned, and sneered; and then, when that availed nothing they started a batch of falsehoods, and accused Nehemiah of trying to rebel against the king. But through all this dust and smudge, the man of God kept right along with his work, which the Lord had called and appointed him to do.

Then these same worthies sent four times in succession for Nehemiah to come down into some of the villages in the plain of Ono, and talk over matters, so that they might get him in their power and do him some mischief. But Nehemiah kept about his work, and sent them word that he was too busy to leave his post of duty to listen to their babbling.

Then the fifth time comes a servant from Sanballat, with an open letter in his hand, impudent and insulting, and it read:—"It is reported among

the heathen, and *Gashmu saith it*, that thou and the Jews think to rebel, and now shall it be reported to the king according to these words? Come now, therefore, and let us take counsel together."

So they kept at it. Once they tried to frighten him to leave the walls and hide in the temple, but he said, "Should such a man as I flee?" But still the lies flew back and forth, fast and furious; nobles in Judah wrote to Tobiah, correspondence was kept up, and Gashmu's falsehoods were peddled among the heathen outside, and the hypocrites within, till the timid were terrified and the strong made weak—but still Nehemiah kept about his wall, which went steadily up beneath his zealous hands.

Gashmu dealt in talk and slander, Nehemiah in stone and timber. Gashmu used lies and Nehemiah lime. Gashmu peddled his abuse among the scoffers, and Nehemiah cried to God for help, and hurried up the walls which had been broken down. And when the walls were finished and the chopfallen foes beheld them, "they were much cast down in their own eyes, for they perceived that this work was wrought by God" (Neh. vi. 16).

Let the servants of God learn a lesson from this story. Gashmu the Arabian is around yet, with his hand against every man, and his tongue like a two-edged sword. And he is at his old business. His stock in trade costs nothing. If he cannot pick up lies by the wayside he can make them to order about any man who serves the Lord and minds his own business. And so "it is told among the heathen, and Gashmu saith it."

Well, what of it? Let the old liar lie, like his lying father; you keep at your work. What if the air is thick with lies, and murky with rumours and false reports, keep about your work. Let them lie, you keep building. And if false-hearted friends around you peddle Gashmu's scandal, still do you keep building up the fallen walls. God will take care of Gashmu and his lies, as He has taken care of other liars before and since. Persistent fidelity will conquer difficulties; the Lord will send prosperity; success will compel silence; and the walls when once up can never be talked down. By-and-by your distrustful friends who have believed and whispered the falsehoods that have so harassed your soul, may have grace to come and own their sin, or sense enough to perceive their folly.

Let Gashmu talk:—only see to it that his talk about you is not true—work on, and you will come out right at last

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Poet's Corner.

"WHAT WILT THOU HAVE ME TO DO?"

THE MASTER'S ANSWER.

HAVE ye looked for sheep in the desert,
For those who have missed their way?
Have ye been in the wild, waste places,
Where the lost and the wandering stray?

Have ye trodden the lonely highway?
The foul and darksome street?
It may be ye've seen in the gloaming
The print of my wounded feet.

Have ye folded home to your bosom
The trembling neglected lamb;
And taught to the little lost one
The sound of the Shepherd's name?
Have ye searched for the poor and needy,
With no clothing, no home, no bread?
The Son of Man was among them,
He had nowhere to lay His head!

Have ye carried the living water
To the parched and thirsty soul?
Have ye said to the sick and wounded,
"Christ Jesus makes you whole"?
Have ye told my fainting children
Of the strength of the Father's hand?
Have ye guided the tottering footsteps
To the shores of the "Golden Land"?

Have ye stood by the sad and weary,
To smooth the pillow of death;
To comfort the sorrow-stricken,
And strengthen the feeble faith?
And have ye felt when the glory
Has streamed through the open door,
And flitted across the shadows,
That I have been there before?

Have ye wept with the broken-hearted
In their agony of woe;
Yet might hear me whispering beside you,
'Tis a pathway I often go?
My disciples, my brethren, my friends,
Can ye dare to follow me?
Then, wherever the Master dwelleth,
There shall the servant be!

C. P.

Teachers' Column.

SUNDAY SCHOOL HEROISMS.

BY THE REV. W. M. STATHAM.

I DARE say that it will be thought a strange conjunction of things by some to find associated in this paper the idea of HEROISM with the plain walls and unpretending proceedings of the Sunday school. Yet the very fact that such a suggestion seems strange shows how there still lingers in our midst old and mistaken ideas of what true heroism is.

True indeed it is that there may be no sketch of character given which embodies sensational elements, such as are to be found in modern fictitious story, but for all that there are here and there little touches of history which are suggestive of heroism, and, as they have on them now the approving eye of the Master, will hereafter receive from His lips the "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Esther A—— may not have anything striking in her appearance; no tragic look of conflict or sorrow may have settled upon her features; but she works hard to support herself, besides which she sends her little brother to school and pays for his education; she takes care of an aged father, and all that she can spare from her little store she loves to minister to his comfort with. The music lessons that she gives are not over-well paid for, and sometimes payment is delayed for many a long, long week; but she knitted the curtains that look so clean in the quiet apartments, and she gave all the little attention to the things which finish, with womanly touches, the room. But for all that, on Saturday night her light burned longer in the parlour when her father was asleep, and she turned over her little store of gathered illustrations, that she might interest young hearts to-morrow in the sweet story of old. She will be up early and have breakfast cleared betimes to be off to the school, whilst the pampered, self-indulgent girls in many respectable families are still in bed; and she will go through rain or snow, only gathering her garments closer about her, and thinking that if she does not face the weather herself, her little children will perhaps follow her absentee example next time. So she gives up rest and sleep, and the parlour fire at home, and goes out into the vineyard for Christ. There *is* heroism here—the heroism of self-denial and self-sacrifice in the service of Him who said, "Feed My lambs."

Walter N—— is a mechanic; his hands have much to do with cold iron in the week, and he changes the material he works upon to warm hearts on Sunday. His father and his mother are dead, and he keeps two sisters and a little brother; he brought them with him just now to the Sunday school, and the two girls have gone to their classes in the other school, while the brother is in the Bible class down-stairs in the vestry; his companions in the yard have most of them gone for an excursion to-day to the sea-side, and have laughed at him for his persistency in going to teach. They have taken up the sneer of the novelist, and said, "Let's see, it's the Brick Lane Branch of the United Ebenezer, isn't it, old fellow?" but he is bold enough and brave enough to keep faithful to his Lord, and he too has heroism enough in him to withstand the ridicule of his "set" when he, week after week, goes off to lead little children by the hand to Christ.

Mrs. M—— is a widow; she has had three children and lost them all; there are no faces to kiss on the pillow now, and with widowhood has come a pretty hard struggle in the bread-winning of human life. The world, however, knows little of the conflict, as she keeps up a ladylike appearance, and never murmurs or complains at the appointments of Providence. But she is superintendent of the girls' school, and when subscriptions are wanted she never fails to do her part with a noble generosity; and during the week-days she goes into sick rooms to visit here and there an absentee whom she has missed from class. True, there is sweet luxury in doing good, but there is an heroic side to her life for all that.

Mary W—— is the daughter of quite worldly parents, who care for little besides a well-spread table and a comfortable sort of life. But the old, old story has touched her heart, and she longs to tell others the joy of knowing Christ, and of finding eternal life in Him. But "a wounded spirit who can bear?" and her work, though consented to at home, yet is it often the subject of subtle satire and manifest contempt. Still she

plies her task, still she takes her accustomed pilgrimage to the neighbouring Sunday school; and in the endeavour to win souls for Christ she secures a joy the world wots not of. For all that, there is a touch of heroism in her life.

It would be perfectly easy to multiply characters at will; all I am anxious for is that in a day when Sunday school work is coming in for sharp and severe criticism, we recognise not only the large amount of instruction that has been given, and the amount of impression that has been produced, and the changed hearts that have been made new by the Holy Spirit of love, but that we recognise also what a sphere these schools have been for the culture of character, for the development of the ennobling elements of the Christian life, and for the manifestation of the truly heroic in the history of the soul.

We have not many revelations made to us of the heroisms of Sunday schools in this world. Now and then, indeed, we catch a glimpse of the self-sacrifices which have been engendered by the love of Christ, but in the great day what glorious revelations there will be of character! The faithful soul will find all the little heroisms recorded in the same book with the grand story of the courage of Moses and the fidelity of Daniel. And verily he that is faithful in that which *is least* shall in no wise lose his reward. The eye of Omnipotence sees all that is exquisitely minute as well as all that is magnificently great; and heroism is not a matter to be measured by the grandeur of the cause, but by the nobility of the heart. There will be other heroes besides the martyrs of the days of Nero, Trajan, and Diocletian in the great day of the Lord; there will be the heroes of life-long duty as well as of death's one pang.

The motive power which lies at the basis of the heroism is the love of Christ. No constraint has ever had such power over human hearts as this. We have heard a good deal lately of the Utilitarian Philosophers. True, they write in reviews, and occasionally condescend to attend a large public meeting, but what schools have they formed? What orphanages have they built? or what wrongs have they redressed? All experience proves that mere utilitarianism and mere expediency fail to move men to deeds of self-sacrifice for the good of men. The cross of Christ lies at the basis of most of our social and philanthropic as well as of our religious institutions. And it is pre-eminently the love of Christ which constrains the hearts of those who devote their time and toil on the Sabbath day to the education of the young in our Sunday schools.

The cup of cold water given with the hand that has often toiled hard all the week shall not lose its reward. No! there is a day when all self-sacrificing labour shall receive its reward in the golden grain of the harvest-field of souls, and in the welcome and "Well done" of Jesus Christ! Moral heroism is not a thing of spontaneous growth; it comes from the grace and help of God, and is nurtured by a faithful obedience to the call of conscience and the claims of Christ. Wonderful traits of character and beautiful touches of history will be brought to light at the last great judgment day; and we are bold to think that amongst the rank and file of our Sunday school teachers there are many secret histories of work done, amidst even privation and suffering, in the cause of the Redeemer. True indeed it is that all self-sacrifice brings its joy here as well as hereafter; but *to take up the cross at the time* is hard work, and requires the special grace of God the Holy Ghost.—*Abridged from Sunday School Teacher.*

Correspondence.

PENNY BANKS AND THE POST OFFICE.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Sir,—Few of the Penny Banks carried on in our Ragged Schools are, I believe, in connection with the Post Office Savings Bank. One of the rules of these states that—

"Charitable Societies and Penny Banks also may deposit their funds, but a copy of their rules must first be sent to the Postmaster-general. Special aid is given to Penny Banks established in connection with Post Office Savings Banks."

Taking advantage of this clause, Ogle Mews Ragged School recently applied to St. Martin's-le-Grand, stating our wish to affiliate our Penny Bank with that of the Post Office. In reply we were told to send a copy of our rules for approval, enclosing at the same time a specimen, which we at once adopted. We were subsequently requested to name two treasurers, and also the Post Office at which we desired to pay in our weekly balances.

In selecting the treasurers it is desirable to name two gentlemen most accessible, as it is necessary when withdrawing money that they should both sign the notice of withdrawal. This, however, can only happen occasionally where a week's notice is required from depositors of the withdrawals, for next week's are at once deducted from this week's deposits, and kept over, the balance only being paid into the treasurer's account.

One great advantage of connection with the Post Office Savings Bank authorities is that they send a supply of deposit books, similar, except in size, to those used all over the kingdom. The names, addresses, and rules of the school, are duly printed on the cover and first page. The children are thus early familiarised with the Post Office deposit books, and let us hope the habit thus formed at school induces them subsequently to open direct accounts. A book for deposits, one for withdrawals, and a ledger, are all that are needed for the school managers to provide.—Yours truly, X. X. X.

Ogle Mews Ragged School, January, 1872.

Facts and Scraps.

Christmas Dinners, &c.—We are glad to report that many Ragged Schools gave dinners of old English fare either on Christmas day or during Christmas week. Among many others, Field Lane dined 500 men and women at the School, and 200 families at their own homes. Lamb and Flag gave a dinner to 700 persons. Hartshorn Court dined above 300 social waifs and strays. Davies's Mews gave a substantial meat breakfast to 700 wayfarers; and New Tothill gave a dinner to 150 children. These dinners were mostly preceded by a religious service, and the cost was defrayed by separate funds.

SOUTHAMPTON RAGGED SCHOOLS.—A munificent donation of £100 has been given by R. H. Perkins, Esq., to Southampton Ragged School in commemoration of the jubilee of his eldest son. This sum has been invested in the Consols for the purpose of applying the proceeds towards keeping the building in a proper state of repair.

A CHRISTMAS GIFT.—In his twelfth number of "Fors Clavigera" Mr. Ruskin tells his working-class readers that he has made them the Christmas gift he promised—£7,000 Consols in all clear—"a fair tithe," he says, "of what I had, and to as much perpetuity as the law will allow me." English law, he thinks, needs mending in many respects; in none more than this. As it stands, he can only vest his gifts in trustees, desiring them, in the case of his death, immediately to appoint their own successors, and in such continued succession to apply the proceeds of the St. George's Fund to the purchase of land in England and Scotland. It is to be cultivated to the utmost attainable fruitfulness and beauty by the labour of man and beast thereon, such men and beasts receiving at the same time the best education attainable by the trustees according to the terms stated in his book.

DRAINAGE IN SOUTH LONDON.—The *South London Courier* says:—If report be correct, the drainage system of South London is far from perfect, and this being so, the lengthened reign of typhoid and other fever in the district is not to be wondered at. We are in a position to state that a very large number of new buildings, even in the principal thoroughfares, are not connected with the street sewer. A heavy responsibility rests upon those who let houses with a knowledge of this state of things, and it behoves all persons taking newly-built houses to look to their drains.

DUST-BINS.—We have repeatedly denounced the folly and danger, the *Lancet* says, of storing up a mass of putrefying refuse in the areas of our houses. In the close courts of the poor, the stench given off from the dust-bin is one of the most frequent sources of fever and disease. Local Boards for years past have been insisting upon the erection of these receptacles; but we are delighted to observe that the City Sewers Commissioners have resolved to revert to the old-fashioned and more wholesome system of scavenging. They have published a list of streets in which the inhabitants are required to deposit, before eight o'clock in the morning daily, excepting Sundays, on the kerbstone of the foot-pavement, in a box or barrel, all ashes, dust, &c., from their respective premises, so that the same may be promptly removed by the scavengers.

EMIGRATION.— he return of the number of emigrants who left these islands for the United States during 1870, shows what has been the remarkable feature of such returns for some years, an increasing outflow from England side by side with a decreasing outflow from Ireland. Last year, for the first time since the potato blight of 1845, the number of emigrants from England actually exceeded the number from the sister country by more than a thousand. The exact figures are 68,935 from England, and 67,891 from Ireland. The security promised by the Land Act began to tell, it thus appears, even before the Act itself came into operation, and helped to strengthen the inducement to stay at home, caused by the rise in the price of wages occasioned by the exodus which has been going on for the past quarter of a century.

FOUL LITERATURE.—A meeting of gentlemen has been held at Glasgow, for the purpose of "considering what steps should be taken in order to put a stop to the further propagation amongst us of a certain class of pictorial literature of the lowest and most degrading description." The meeting was unanimously of opinion that action should be taken, and for that purpose a committee was formed, and the secretary was instructed to com-

municate with other organisations interested in the movement, so that such steps might be taken "as may be necessary to put a stop to this crying evil." It was a subject of complaint amongst the gentlemen present, that Government should allow the country to be flooded with such pernicious publications.

SMALLPOX HOSPITALS. — Into the Smallpox Hospitals of the Asylum Board Managers, upwards of 11,000 patients have been received, during the recent epidemic, in a period of little more than six months. Hampstead alone sheltered more than 5,000. No metropolitan hospital, except that at Highgate, would receive these patients, and, but for the rapidly improvised hospital accommodation, most of these patients must have remained at home as foci of disease. This enormous number of patients received will show at once the magnitude of the recent epidemic, and the great services which the new establishments have rendered. But for them the epidemic must have continued much longer and spread far more widely. It is satisfactory to find that the mortality of these smallpox asylums does not in any degree exceed the standard mortality of the disease in epidemic periods. It is highly important also to note that the same absolute immunity from contagion has been secured for all the servants, nurses, and attendants of the hospital by re-vaccination.

Notices of Meetings.

SERMON LANE, ISLINGTON.

The annual meeting of the friends and subscribers of Sermon Lane Ragged Schools was held in the lecture-hall of Islington Chapel, Upper Street, under the presidency of the Rev. J. Thain Davidson.

Mr. W. H. Cæsar, the hon. secretary, read the report:—The Day School average attendance, boys, 98; girls, 60; infants, 24. During the year there have been sent to places 36 boys and 25 girls. Sent to pay schools, 16 boys and 16 girls; to Roman Catholic Schools, 5; removals to the country and other parts of London, 59 boys and 14 girls; deaths, 2. The Sunday Schools (afternoon and evening), as in former years, have been under the superintendence of two members of your committee. Average attendance on Sunday afternoons, 80. Attendance on Sunday evenings in the summer months average 70; in the winter 120. In connection with the Sunday School there have been Parents' Annual Tea Meeting, Meeting for Old Scholars, Children's Treats, &c., the funds being raised by the friends who conduct the Sunday School specially for these objects. Mr. Fuller has under his care the Sunday Morning and Evening Services, which have been carried on during the year, with the kind assistance of different gentlemen accustomed to labour amongst the masses. The attendance has been encouraging; in the summer months an average—morning, 60; evening, 35: in the winter months—morning, 90; evening, 55. From November to March the liberality of friends provides a breakfast on Sunday mornings for the very destitute. About 60 each week availed themselves of it. The Prayer Meeting on Tuesday evenings has an attendance varying from 20 in the summer to 35 in the winter. The Patching Class, in which boys and girls are taught to mend their own clothes, is in vigorous operation. About 70 children

attend it. In addition to the special work indicated by the name of the class, some are taught to make new clothing. Children's Provident Fund: Number of depositors, 80, an increase of five on the previous year; amount paid in, £9 18s. 3½d., an increase of £1 7s. 218 articles of clothing have been sold, and 7 pairs of boots, while 4 pairs have been repaired at the expense of the fund. The various articles are sold at two-thirds the cost of the materials. Mothers' Class—43 names on the books, with an attendance varying from 25 to 30. Payments to Clothing Fund, £3 13s. 0½d.; payments to Coal Fund, £3 1s. 1d.; 4s. 2d. has been added to the deposits in the Coal Fund as interest. The treasurer of the Penny Bank reports as follows:—Receipts to 9th December, £121 14s.; transfers, £3 17s. 5d.—£125 11s. 5d. Payments, £82 4s. 1d.; balance, £43 7s. 4d.

The financial position of the school, although not perfectly satisfactory, is better than it was at the close of the financial year, September 30, 1870. Then there was a balance due to the hon. secretary of £3 13s. 10½d., besides liabilities amounting to between £30 and £40. This year the balance in hand was £9 9s. 3½d., and the liabilities about £13 or £14. The salaries and current expenses of the school have quite absorbed the balance with which the financial year opened, and with the rent to Christmas there will be a debt of £20 to meet, besides the ordinary expenses for salaries, &c.

The meeting was addressed by Messrs. Curtis, Fuller, Larmont, Miller, and Stockall.

SOUTHAMPTON.

The annual meeting in connection with these schools took place at the Victoria Rooms, under the presidency of the mayor (Mr. H. J. Buchan, J.P.), who was supported by the Revs. Basil Wilberforce, A. B. Burton, J. Ryan, and Herbert Smith; Mr. E. Palk, J.P., Mr. J. Cocks, J.P., Mr. Alderman Payne.

Mr. C. C. Smith (hon. sec.) read the report, which said that the statistics relating to the Boys' School show that the number of new scholars admitted was 144; previously admitted, 1,858; total number under instruction since the opening of the school, 2,002. Average attendance on week days, 188; ditto on Sundays, 54; ditto Evening School, 25. The Day School is in a satisfactory condition, the marked attention paid by the elder boys to the Scripture lessons, and the interest they manifest in transcribing and learning portions of Scripture, induces the hope that this particular part of their education is duly appreciated by them. The Infant School is conducted by an assistant-master in a separate room. This classification of the children has been attended with good results. The Evening School is open twice a week for the elder lads, of whom there are 50 on the books, with an average attendance of 25. Many of them, though upwards of seventeen years of age, are unable to read or write. 140 children are provided every Saturday with a good substantial dinner. Nearly 21,000 of these meals have been supplied by this agency. Since the opening, in 1852, 2,794 girls and infants have been admitted to the school, 123 fresh scholars have entered this year, and the number now on the books is 350,—viz., 228 girls and 122 infants, with an average daily attendance of 226, viz., 146 girls and 80 infants. The average attendance has been much lower this year, owing to smallpox. 28 girls have left for service, and there have been 9 deaths during the year. The Sunday School is considerably reduced in number, there being seldom more than 30 to 40 present. The attendance at the Evening School has increased, there being about 40 on the books, with an average attendance of from 27 to 30. The improvement in plain needlework and darning is very satisfactory, and two second prizes were obtained at the Exhibtion of Juvenile Industry this year.

Papers, Original and Selected.

SOME RECENT ATTACKS ON RAGGED SCHOOLS.

PROBABLY no warrior was more engaged in fighting for his country than was Luther in battling for the truth. Set for the defence of the faith in an age when tradition had shrouded primitive Christianity, and almost destroyed morals, his life was a long contest for the "faith once delivered to the saints." Yet even he had his intervals of quiet, when the enemy seemed to have spent all his arrows. This led him on one occasion to say, "What can I have done to please Satan, that he thus leaves me unmolested?"

This question of Luther every earnest Ragged School worker might twelve months ago have asked himself, in doubt about his real standing. The fact was, that in spite of the doubts of the worldling as to the power of the gospel to save our social outcasts, most startling facts had cropped out—were visible, indeed, in the form of our busy shoeblacks in all the leading thoroughfares—to prove that Christian love could do what legal force could never accomplish. This set all criticism as to plans or machinery at rest; and press, and pulpit, and even the legislature, all testified to the success of our great social mission. For as a great French writer said, "nothing succeeds like success;" so most gainsayers were changed from what they saw into at least professed admirers of Ragged Schools.

But suddenly—almost synchronous with the passing of the "Elementary Education Act"—flaws were found in our plans, and many even objected to the very principle of Ragged Schools. They asserted, in fact, that, if the three "R's" were taught in childhood, crime and vice would die out; or, in other words, that a knowledge of reading and writing would so change our fallen nature that wisdom and virtue would be victors. We shall not waste our readers' time by refuting this glaring heresy; save by asking those who think that culture is the parent of justice and virtue, how it was that, when Rome was at its highest pitch of

intellect, the hideous picture drawn by Paul (Rom. i. 13, *et seq.*) was a true photograph of its morality.

We will not, however, go more fully into this branch of the subject, as we wish to refer more particularly to two recent attacks on Ragged Schools, in which some attempt at objection, based on what the writers regard as failures, is made.

Thus, in the *Islington Gazette* of August 18th last it was stated in a leader that the school buildings are "mostly low, dark, damp, and without ventilation, and *wholly unsuited* for school purposes." That some might be improved in sanitary respects we should be the last to deny; but at the same time we as distinctly affirm that these form but a small part of the aggregated buildings. This will be seen when it is stated that, out of 188 school buildings, 103 were built as schools, and have every modern sanitary appliance. Again, above two-thirds of the residue have been so altered and improved that none but an architect who should place beauty of form before utility could raise any objection.

Of *outside* evils, doubtless, visitors might well complain, for the foul surroundings too often render schools unhealthy. Yet when we compare the neat, clean, wholesome schoolroom with the foul alleys and dens from which most of the scholars emerge—it will be seen what a practical lesson we teach their parents that, however poor, their homes need not be foul unwholesome hovels.

A more recent attack was made by an anonymous correspondent in the *Daily Telegraph* of January 8th last. To this assailant the Secretary of the Ragged School Union replied in a letter which appeared in that journal on January 13th. This accuser did not disguise his wish to *crush* Ragged Schools, at once, and for ever—indicating, in so many words, that they were not only antagonistic to the School Board, but were a disgrace to education. To this unwarrantable attack, which was more abusive than argumentative, we think the words of an old writer are the best reply—"To his arguments I say—*thus;* to his abuse—*nothing!*

This anonymous accuser dared to insinuate that Ragged Schools are countervailing the efforts of the London School Board. Now what is the fact? That the officials of the Ragged School Union have not only been in constant communication with the officers of the School Board, but have aided its investigations to their utmost

ability. Again, so far is its distinguished chairman, Lord Lawrence, from thinking that Ragged Schools are "obstacles to the efforts of the School Board," that last month he renewed his liberal annual subscription of £10. We thus place against the abuse of this "man in the mask" the broad fact that the chairman of the School Board has given his adhesion to the system in the most tangible form he could possibly adopt.

But the great argument of this anonymous assailant against Ragged Schools—our Day Schools especially—is that the Government Inspectors have reported that very many are "inefficient." Now he forgot to add that several National Schools, not connected with the Privy Council, have also been reported by the Inspectors as "inefficient." Their managers, astonished at such a decision, have denounced the reports as most unjust. The Clerkenwell National School, and that of St. Mary Magdalene, Marylebone, are cases in point. But to return to our own Day Schools. We may state that about ten Ragged Schools are already connected with the Privy Council, and receive capitation grants. Again, so successfully did several Day Schools pass the examination, that their teachers sat for certificates last Christmas. The teachers of above twenty other schools were invited by the Inspectors so to sit; and several more have applied for that third-class certificate which their age and the attainments of their scholars warrant. In all these cases, a certain number of scholars had to pass in "the three R's," or the Inspectors were not permitted to advise teachers to seek for certificates.

And here we think it right to ourselves to make one complaint against the Government Inspectors. When they examine any school connected with the Privy Council they furnish a report to the managers; but this was not the case with Ragged Schools, so that the local committees are quite in the dark as to the particulars of failure. Surely the rule which governs National and British Schools ought to be general; and every Ragged School ought to be supplied with the detailed *results* of the examination.

We would now refer to the secular attainments of our day scholars. To read the attack of the "man in the mask," any who are ignorant of the plans of the Ragged School Union would be led to think that above 20,000 children are collected into our Day Schools, and then, like the ostrich with her eggs, are left to fare as best they may. Now what is the fact? In addition to regular

visitation, they are examined every year by the Inspectors of the Ragged School Union. Though of course low pitched, so rigidly is the test adhered to, that last year a complaint was made by the managers of a Ragged School receiving Government aid that the Union was "more strict than the Government Inspector!"

But strict as was the examination in 1871, what was the result?

Those gentlemen examined 11,445 children (all of whom had attained six years) out of 19,309 in attendance. The result was that 4,782 passed in reading; 5,839 in writing; and 2,777 in dictation-spelling. In arithmetic, 5,286 passed in addition; 3,479 in addition and subtraction; 2,350 in addition, subtraction, and multiplication; and 1,580 in the four rules; 2,438 passed in multiplication table; 3,129 in notation of three figures; and 1,915 in four figures.

Now, considering the homes and habits of these children, we think that such results prove that our Ragged Day Schools have shown no mean power even as respects secular education.

We cannot conclude our reply to our recent assailants without referring to a deputation from the School Board which met the Home Secretary on January 30th ult. Their object was to induce Government to sanction the establishment of new Industrial Schools in opposition to the opinion of the Rev. Sydney Turner, who thought that the agents of the School Board and the magistrates far too often sent in cases not intended by the Act. Into the merits of the disputed points we do not propose to enter; but in endorsing this opinion, Mr. Bruce stated that—

"The result of the information acquired by the Home Office was that not more than half those children who had been sent to Industrial Schools during the last quarter ought to have been sent there; and the effect of sending them there was very injurious and demoralising to the parents generally. During the last nine months, 315 boys and 73 girls had been sent to Industrial Schools, and of these 220 had both parents living, 34 had a father living, and 93 a mother living; whilst only 41 were orphans or illegitimate. By far the greater part of the children were not those contemplated by the Act. They were not of the criminal class, and were not begging, but were wandering or neglected by their parents. They each cost in the schools £13 a year out of the general taxation of the country. From the returns he also found

that the parents in many cases were earning as much as 20s. or 25s. a week. Nothing was more demoralising to the parents of the country than to see their neighbours' children who ran about the streets taken up and lodged, and clothed, and fed, whilst they endeavoured themselves to educate, and clothe, and feed their children in many cases upon very small means."

In the course of his observations, Mr. Bruce made a suggestion which, as justifying the Ragged School system, deserves citation. He said that—

"A great number of these children would, undoubtedly, be better at home, and he thought it would be desirable to consider whether a sort of intermediate class—*between an Elementary and an Industrial School*—could not be provided, where education and partial food and clothing could be given, and the child might lodge at home."

Now this is just what Ragged Schools have done, are doing, and mean to continue to do. By dinners and clothing, they both feed and clothe; and thus provide for the physical needs of thousands of destitute children.

We leave these remarks for the consideration of all who can look at *both* sides of a question, and who do not confound mere assertion with solid facts. It is possible that we shall eventually, as elementary education becomes more general, be led to devote ourselves more specially to the social and spiritual aspects of Ragged Schools. But, in the meantime, we are not prepared to abandon any part of machinery which God has so signally blessed. On reviewing, then, the attacks of our assailants, and seeing how baseless are their best arguments, we cannot but look cheerfully to the future, believing that, however hazy the outlook may be, we shall find, in the words of Athanasius, that "it is only a little cloud, and it will soon pass away!"

REST FOR WEARY WORKERS.

A LETTER FROM "A. L. O. E."

Last year so much benefit was derived by many of the most active and earnest of the paid staff of Ragged Schools from the successful appeal of "A. L. O. E." to give them a week's rest in the country, that we are glad that she has renewed her former suggestion. Not only did the seventy-three hard workers receive personal benefit, but we think that through their energies being thus braced up, their schools were also greatly benefited.

We might say more, but we think that, wielding the pen of a "ready writer," "A. L. O. E." so admirably shows the "why and the wherefore" of another week's rest for weary workers as to render further remarks superfluous.

February 9th.

DEAR SIR,—Spring has come upon us early this year; I have already heard the notes of blackbird and thrush, and the carol of the lark in the air. It is time to think of the "Weary Workers," who, after the noise and din of crowded schoolrooms, so much need to enjoy the sweet sounds of nature. I am thankful to find that no fewer than seventy-three Ragged School teachers had the benefit of a week's holiday in the country last year; though only thirty were sent during 1870. The machinery which you employ for giving to some of your valuable workers a change of air and scene is so simple and inexpensive, and at the same time so effectual, that I trust that it will this year be set in motion early. No one can calculate the advantage, not only to the teachers, but to their scholars, likely to result from the former returning to their arduous labours with spirits refreshed and frames invigorated by a week's rest in the country.

Yours faithfully,

A. L. O. E.

GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

ON Monday, Jan. 30th., a deputation from the London School Board waited upon Mr. Bruce, at the Home Office, to confer with him respecting the Government action of late with regard to Industrial Schools. Lord Lawrence headed the deputation, and among those present were Sir Thomas Tilson, Mr. MacGregor, Mr. Hutchins, Mr. Strutton, Mr. Green, Mr. Chatfeild Clarke, and Mr. Croad.

Lord Lawrence, in introducing the deputation, stated that Industrial Schools available for London children had been filled up, and no more accommodation existed for the children it was found desirable to send. Where private individuals were anxious to assist in rescuing the young from crime, and the London School Board attempted to provide more accommodation, the Government Inspector refused to certify for any more schools, which meant that the Government would not pay towards the keep of any more children, and the deputation had come to ask the reason why.

Mr. Bruce asked if the compulsory clauses of the Education Act had yet been put in force, to see what effect that would have, and what was paid out of the rates by the London School Board for the children sent to Industrial Schools under the Industrial Schools Act. Mr. Green, replying to the last question, said the Board paid 4s. 6d. a week for each child, and he regretted to say that a capital site for an Industrial School had been lost in consequence of the refusal of the Government Inspector to certify it. The Board had not yet put the compulsory powers of the Education Act into operation.

Mr. Bruce then said that the Government action in this matter, of which

the deputation complained, had not been taken without a great deal of careful inquiry. The result of this inquiry was to show that among the children sent to the Industrial Schools were many children who had parents living and in work, and these children certainly ought not to be sent there at the cost of the taxpayers, for it was unjust to the taxpayers and demoralising for the parents of that class of children. During the last nine months 315 boys and 73 girls had been sent to Industrial Schools in London. Of these 220 had both parents living, 34 had a father living, 93 had a mother living, and only 41 were orphans or illegitimate children, so that by far the greater part of those admitted during the nine months were not children contemplated by the Act to be provided for by the taxpayers. The Act contemplated that the children to be provided for under its provisions should be wandering and neglected children for whom there were no means of support, and these were sent to Industrial Schools, at a cost of £13 a year on the taxation of the country. In some of these cases of children being thus supported out of taxation, he had details as to the condition in life of the parents, and he found that the fathers were earning 25s., 20s., and 18s. a week respectively, and for these people to have the responsibility of their children taken off their hands was demoralising to them and to their neighbours, and it was a great grievance to sober and persevering parents to see the children of the drunken and improvident provided for simply that the parents' neglect should not be detrimental to the children. He then referred to the effect of putting in force the compulsory clauses at Stockport, where parents had been compelled to send their children to school, and he thought the Government, after giving consideration to the effect of the working of the compulsory clauses at Stockport, had done right in withholding its hands from giving more assistance to Industrial Schools. Circumstances had greatly changed since the passing of the Industrial Schools Act, for new forces had been brought into action (referring to the compulsory clauses of the Education Act); and the deputation must see that it was both injurious to the national revenue and demoralising to encourage parents to rid themselves of their children. The Government Inspector had done his duty in refusing to certify other Industrial Schools, and further, it became his duty seriously to consider whether he should not recommend the treasury to reduce the allowance. He thought that in many instances the children would be better out o these schools, and he suggested that there was a class of school wanted between the Elementary School and the Industrial School, where the children might be partially fed and educated.

Lord Lawrence remarked that, taking the figures given by Mr. Bruce as correct, it was strange that the magistrates who passed the children did not reject the improper cases. With regard to the compulsory clauses, the question had been debated, and the denominational difficulty had impeded the action of the Board in putting the law into force. Mr. Bruce desired the deputation to understand that he was not presuming to censure the London School Board, but he really thought the children whom it was proposed to send to Industrial Schools should be more sifted down. Mr. MacGregor explained how the Committee of the Board selected cases to be sent, and

declared that all proper care was taken in the selection. He asked whether, in the figures read out, the cases selected by the Board and the cases sent in from elsewhere had been distinguished. Mr. Bruce replied in the negative, for they had all been classed together. There were 1,140 more children sent to the schools this year than last. Mr. MacGregor replied that it was to be supposed that the new regulations would increase the numbers, and then, too, the magistrates made some parents contribute towards the cost of their children being kept. Mr. Scrutton added that, of all the children brought before the Committee of the Board, only one-third were selected to be sent. Sir Thomas Tilson said that though the fathers might have 20s. and 25s. a week wages, yet, with large families, perhaps with sick wives and ailing children, this was no very prosperous amount, and the case of Stockport was very different from London. Industrial Schools and Reformatories were the creations of modern times, and though they might be expensive, yet they really relieved the taxation of the country by diminishing the ranks of crime and pauperism. Mr. Bruce replied that there could be no two opinions about that, but still relieving parents of the responsibility of maintaining their children was demoralising. Sir Thomas Tilson rejoined that something of that kind might be expected in all human institutions. At the Committee of the Board that morning, he added that fourteen cases out of seventy which came before the Board had been referred to the Board by magistrates. Mr. Hutchins reminded the Home Secretary that the School Board had the best reasons to be careful, for they paid the ratepayers' money, and the Board worked with a sense of responsibility which the voluntary societies which hunted up the cases did not have.

After some further conversation, Mr. Bruce said he had no objection to give the London School Board an opportunity of investigating the facts with regard to the class of children sent to these schools, and he was not unwilling to have another building inspected with a view to its being certified as an Industrial School, on the understanding that the Government allowance should be reduced from 5s. a week each child to 3s. 6d. The deputation thanked Mr. Bruce and retired.

OLD BRENTFORD RAGGED SCHOOL.

Amongst the numerous important social questions which now agitate the public mind, that of the education of the children of the working classes is perhaps the most prominent. Since the opening of the first Sunday School by Robert Raikes at Gloucester in 1788, on to the introduction of British Schools ten years later—intended for the poorest children, but which, with Government aid, became practically useful to those of higher grade only—on again to the establishment of Ragged Schools in 1844, so called purposely to exclude those better-to-do, this educational question has been throughout most conspicuous, and to some vexing.

There are few places in the United Kingdom where this subject should possess greater interest than in Brentford. The number of poor in the town is in far greater proportion to the total population than is general in

England; whilst the facilities for the employment of children during part of the year, coupled with the poverty of the parents, and their consequent need of the children's earnings, however small, necessarily induce complete indifference to education, and leave the little ones to grow in ignorance, with all its attendant evils.

This caused some friends of the poor to open a Ragged School in 1867 in the disused British School in One Tun Alley, Brentford.

The fact that some free Day Schools for ragged children have not been well attended has led many to suppose that "the poor value nothing that costs them nothing." This assumption is certainly inapplicable here. Some time poor parents—themselves without education—did not comprehend its advantages; but as the truth—that prosperity in any calling can scarcely be attained without it—has become by experience to be understood, so has the desire to have their children well taught become more intense. To this is to be attributed the increased and still increasing number of ragged children attending these schools. They have been drawn from the streets; not from other schools, and there are so many of them, that the managers have been obliged, by the recommendation of her Majesty's Inspector, to separate the children below six years of age, and form of them a distinct school, under the control of a fully certificated mistress. During the past year 336 children have been admitted, making a total since the opening of the schools in January, 1867, of 1,628 scholars. The number now on the books is 337. Of their attainments her Majesty's Inspector and the School Agent of the Ragged School Union speak most highly.

Children are received almost as soon as they can walk. Some are fourteen years old when they enter the school; but whatever their age, nearly all have to begin with the alphabet. Some are exceedingly acute, and make rapid progress.

The order established deserves great commendation, especially when it is remembered of what waifs and strays the school is composed. Illustration: A ragged urchin was carried to the school door by his mother, with the assistance of her neighbours; immediately on gaining the use of his legs he began to kick every one about him, and throw stones as fast as he could find them; his mother retreated to escape his violence. On entering the school he refused to hang up his cap, and threw it on the ground. During instruction he sulked in a corner of the room until the time for recreation in the playground arrived; when, instead of marching there in order with the others, he made straight for the door, clearing desks, forms, and everything in his way. Having gained the playground he struck out right and left; but his blows not being returned, he began to cool down, and before the school closed his Ismaelitish spirit was partially subdued, and in a few days he became as obedient as the others.

With children previously subjected to no continuous control, quite hardened to the "deal," as they call it, meaning the stick, which is frequently laid about them for no good reason, but according to the pleasure or rather temper of their parents, it is marvellous how soon they succumb to firmness and kindness, coupled with the example of those who have been longer in the school. Amongst these, disobedience is unknown; and com-

pulsion is quite unnecessary to ensure attendance. The master writes: "The evil habits of lying, dishonesty, anger, revenge, disorder, and indecency, *have been* very prominent." Adverting particularly to the second of these, he adds: "For many months after the school was first opened, books, slates, pens, &c., were purloined in great numbers. I lent slates, intending the children to prepare lessons at home, but, in most cases, I never saw the slates again; and for over twelve months found it impossible to carry out this desirable system. Now nearly every child, every day, takes home a slate to prepare lessons for the following day. Several have been accidentally broken, but not one slate has been stolen for more than nine months past. Practical honesty is so thoroughly established, that pence, pens, &c., have often lain untouched on a school desk for several days." Surely if schools like this one—free to the poorest, open only to the ragged—were multiplied, refuges for criminal youths, prisons for the hardened adult, and casual wards for the wanderer, would be almost needless.

In the Sunday School the noteworthy features have been favourable—greater regularity in attendance, further improvement in conduct, and increased attention to the teaching. These are attributable mainly to the larger number of teachers, and to their attention to the regulations of the school made to ensure order, and which include both reward for good conduct, and punishment—*not the rod*—for bad behaviour. The attendance of teachers has varied between eight and twenty-one each Sunday evening; that of scholars from 110 to 382. In point of order and conduct generally, the school, though of ragged children, will bear favourable comparison with some of the Sunday Schools in the parish frequented by a higher class of children. The parents of some of the roughest boys have voluntarily testified to the improvement in the conduct of their children.

A Working Class was held during the winter months, when the elder girls and young women who attend it could not work out-of-doors. The average attendance was about forty, and the number of garments made exceeded 100. One-third of the cost of material was paid by the Society and two-thirds by the learners.

Of the young people placed in situations from this class and from the Sunday School twelve girls and four boys complied with the rules of the Ragged School Union, and obtained prizes last year for retaining their places without complaint from their employers during one full year or more. Some had done so for three years. Others of the scholars had maintained their positions with good character, but did not come strictly within the Union regulations. All these have ACCOUNTS WITH THE POST-OFFICE SAVINGS BANK, with credit balances of 7s. 6d. up to more than 20s. each, to which additions are made periodically from their small earnings; and, be it remembered, all these were *really ragged* children, some completely orphans; but all are now earning their own livelihood in a respectable and praiseworthy manner.

But, it may be asked, are we not needlessly and improperly supplanting their parents? Are not *they* the most fit guardians of their own children? Doubtless they are, as a rule; but some of these are orphans, and some would be better off if they were orphans. For many cases assisted by the

committee, provision is made in the workhouse; but, rather than be separated from their children—rather than abandon their little home, never again, as they fear, to return to it—the poor people refuse the comforts of the great house, and prefer to starve outside its walls.

A few cases of this kind may be recorded: (1) Mr. and Mrs. F. and four children, ages from nearly one to eleven years, husband without work three months, a sober man, always brought home all he did earn. The missionary's inquiry elicited the fact that Mrs. F., with the babe at her breast wetted with her tears, had tasted nothing for two days. (2) Very cold weather, missionary invited by a neighbour to a dark underground damp room, found a woman lying on an old sacking and a few rags, five children, no light, no fire, no food of any kind, and no means of getting any, until the next parochial allowance may be received; the husband was out of work. Are you ill, Mrs. F.? Very ill, was the reply; the neighbour explained that it was her time of nature's sorrow. (3) No. 1, Sussex Place, a poor old man, very ill, his wife and daughter about seventeen years of age, very deaf, one chair, one box, all other furniture disposed of, no food, no money. In cases such as these, a loaf of bread, a pound of meat, or a little tea and sugar is invariably given.

In conclusion, we ask the reader to remember that our Lord never suffers his people to be his creditors. The late Rev. John Andrew Jones, a poor minister, whilst walking in Cheapside, was appealed to by some one he knew for help. He had but a shilling in the world, and poised it in his mind, to give or not to give? The greater distress of his *vis-à-vis* prevailed, and he gave, leaving himself with nothing but the promise, "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given, will he pay him again." He had not gone 100 yards farther before he met a gentleman who said, "Ah, Mr. Jones, I am glad to see you. I have had this sovereign in my waistcoat pocket this week past for some poor minister, and you may as well have it;" but, added Mr. Jones, "if I had not stopped to give relief, I should have missed the gentleman and the sovereign too."

Kindly cast up *your* account now, Christian reader, and see how much *thou* owest unto thy Lord; then take thy cheek and write £ . You know where to send it.

CAN RAGGED SCHOOLS BE SUPERSEDED?

WHILST some persons are coldly anticipating the possible extinction of Ragged Schools, that able organ of general philanthropy, the *Mirror*, gives cogent reasons why they are as much needed, and hence why they should be supported more liberally than ever. The argument is of the more value because it is based solely on the *social* advantages of Ragged Schools and their offshoots. Superseded by any new-fangled system they can never be; and hence, if allowed to die the unnatural death of starvation, society would soon reap the penalty of its crime. This the *Mirror* indicates in the following words:—

When we think of that fearfully neglected crop of children who still swarm our streets, we may form an approximate idea of what would have been the state of London in the present day had there been no Ragged

Schools, no Refuges, no Penitentiaries. For when all these agencies sprang into existence compulsory education would have been scouted as an Utopian dream. There were no School Boards, and no school beadles to hunt out little vagrants that they might be instructed in the rudiments, *nolentes volentes*. We did not in those days recognise as a duty and obligation of the State to take the first step in the repression of crime by educating the masses. The whole force of the law was brought to bear on the criminal, but it left untouched the sources of crime. We made war on all who had broken such of the commandments as are held to be invested with a legal status, but we did not teach them how to keep them until philanthropy, acting on the wise principle, "Prevention is better than cure," stepped in and undertook the task.

Thus it was that Ragged Schools were established for the destitute and neglected children of our streets. And thus it was that Refuges and Homes opened a door of mercy to all who were in danger of falling into crime, and even to those who *had* fallen—to the outcast of both sexes.

But suppose all those in danger of becoming evil-doers, or of actual evil-doers, who have been reclaimed, had been left unchecked, can anyone picture what the result must have been? We must have had gaols in every little town and village in the kingdom, and penal settlements in every portion of her Majesty's dominions abroad. Why, England would have been almost made bankrupt by the cost of maintaining her criminal classes, seeing what is the present ratio per head, and what a much more expensive process it is to keep a thief in prison than to convert a thief's child into an honest man or woman.

It is no use to run down Ragged Schools and Refuges now-a-days, and say they have done their work, and must now give way to the altered circumstances of the age. To say nothing of the ingratitude for past favours thus implied, there is really no truth in the remark itself. In time to come, the Ragged School may become absorbed in the general plan of state education, but *for years it will have its own proper vocation, and its own peculiar work*. Then as to the Refuges and Homes of a preventive or reformatory character, their existence must ever be a necessity, unless indeed we are prepared to supersede them by the gaol itself.

Education will do much, but it will not prevent poor and neglected children, albeit they comply with the demands of the law as to school attendance, from yielding to the many temptations which surround their whole existence, or becoming merged in the moral pollution of their own squalid homes. Education, again, will not, as we well know, be a safeguard against a relapse into crime if unaccompanied by that disciplinary treatment which the "Homes" provide as a preparatory training in honest ways.

So without underrating the blessings of education, and which, now that it is enforced by law, will be more and more apparent every year, we cannot, as Christians and philanthropists, or even as political economists, absolve ourselves from the obligation of maintaining, in their full integrity, the many institutions for good which have already achieved so much for the destitute and the neglected, and which must ever form part and parcel in the general scheme of human happiness.

MEN-SERVANTS' HOME.

THE records of Ragged Schools show that many of our best conducted lads become domestic servants. As might be expected, this is especially the case with the Ragged Schools planted in the west of London. Usually first appointed as pages, they eventually become footmen; others of a rougher type become grooms. Though exposed to peculiar temptation, little provision is made for their social wants, especially when out of employment. We are glad, then, to find, from the following account of the "Men-Servants' Home," contained in the *British Messenger*, that some provision is at last being made to meet the special social and spiritual needs of men-servants.

"Among the many 'Homes' which abound in London, there are few more important than 'Servants' Homes.' But while there are various Homes for female servants, there is only one 'Men-Servants' Home' in all the metropolis; and it has been in existence for less than two years, having been opened in the beginning of 1870, at 10, Sloane Terrace, Chelsea.

Its origin is interesting and full of hope for its future. It has come out of a Servants' Mission, which sprung from a prayer-meeting of Christian servants which seven years ago met once a week in a hired room to pray for their own class, asking God to raise up some agency to seek their spiritual welfare. From prayer they went to work; and step by step they have been led on, holding special services, Bible-classes, and prayer-meetings for servants; engaging missionaries, having open-air addresses at night during the London season, distributing tracts and books, and speaking to servants when waiting outside for their masters and mistresses. By these means much good has been accomplished and souls saved.

The need of a Home was much felt, and after a time sufficient means to warrant it having been obtained, the house in Sloane Terrace was taken and furnished with accommodation for twelve men and the missionary, Mr. Goodchild, and his wife, who superintend. It is intended for respectable men-servants while out of place, and seventy-eight such were received into it during the last twelve months. The terms, paid in advance, are, for board and lodgings, 12s. per week, or lodgings alone, 3s. per week. There is a reading-room, with fire, gas, and every convenience. The Home has been quite a success. It has been highly appreciated by the servants, but it is too small; several applications for admission have been refused, and the room used for meetings is not sufficient to accommodate the numbers who attend. If there was accommodation for a greater number of boarders, the Home could be made self-supporting, even at the rates at present charged.

The Home and the Mission are mutually helpful. The Mission is vigorously prosecuting its good work. It has three mission rooms—one in Derby Street, Mayfair, one in Nutford Place, Edgware Road, and the third in 10, Sloane Terrace—where services are held on week-evenings, and the Lord's day in the afternoon. There are quarterly gatherings of Christian servants, with an average attendance of 70; and besides these, there were seven free teas given during the year. There are two regular

missionaries constantly employed, and a third was engaged for the season; and the whole work is overlooked by Miss Malpas, a lady who devotes herself freely to the work.

The mission work is not confined to men-servants, but embraces female servants also, though the Home is exclusively for men-servants. There is also in connection with the Home an agency for servants, both male and female. It is very refreshing to see the prayerful spirit in which all the work is carried on. The great aim is to win souls to Christ. This whole institution deserves to be known and to be supported. That the servants themselves appreciate it is plain; one has only to glance over the list of subscriptions and donations to see this. But it well merits greater support from masters and mistresses."

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THREE SOCIAL WAIFS.

THE Angel at Islington is a well-known resort of youthful ragamuffins, especially in the evening. There we can always find groups of boys, some vending penny newspapers or fusees, mingled with many flower girls, equally ragged and impudent. Where they live no one knows, and, save a few earnest Ragged School workers, no one cares. But there they are, picking up a precarious living; most half starving, whilst the successful too often gamble away their hard earnings.

Recently the special correspondent of a daily paper contrived to learn from their own lips the strange histories of three of these poor victims of parental and social neglect. He says that—

"It was a miserable day, and the drizzling rain was falling colder than snow, when suddenly there leaped out of the mud one of exactly the sort on which his mind was dwelling—a poor shoeless, shuffling little wretch, whose entire suit consisted of a pair of manly trousers ingeniously secured by a single brace over a dilapidated shirt of the Guernsey order, and whose stock-in-trade was five or six cakes of boot blacking, contained in a box slung round his neck. The box had no lid, and the rain was so rapidly liquefying the paper-covered cakes, that the one he held out for sale drooped across his mite of a hand—deadly white with cold where it was not black with grime—in a manner not calculated to tempt a person who was some miles distant from home, and who really was not urgently in need of blacking. 'Buy a a'porth,' pleaded the small boy; 'here ye are, take three on 'em for a penny, *that* won't hurt yer!' Great was the boy's amazement when he was bade to go and wait a little while at the corner of the next street, where he might earn a shilling easily.

The next capture was a fusee boy; and the third was a red-haired freckled little savage, nick-named 'Ginger,' who scorned trade, who lived in lawless relations to all other boys; and who, having just finished a wild encounter with a boy much bigger and older than himself by butting him in the pit of the stomach and bringing him to the ground, proceeded with calm precision to execute a war-dance of victory.

A quarter of an hour later we four—the blacking boy, the cigar-light vendor, Mr. Ginger, and the reader's humble servant—were comfortably bestowed in the parlour of a little ale-house in the Pentonville Road, with bread and cheese before us, and a glorious fire burning in the grate, in the fender of which my thrifty blacking boy laid out his little stock to dry. Ginger's delight, when the landlord brought in along with a big loaf the half of a huge Cheshire cheese, was a sight to behold; his amazement when the landlord left the room, leaving the half-cheese behind him, I will not attempt to describe. 'He's forgot it, ain't he?' he said, handling his knife as though sadly tempted to make the most of the innkeeper's mistake by slicing off a pound or so. 'No, he hasn't forgotten, my lad,' said I, 'he'll fetch it away when we have done with it.' 'When we have done with it! What, are we going to eat as much as we likes on it?' 'Yes.' Ginger lost not a moment more. Licking his lips as I cut him a liberal slice, he pounced on it and a haunch of bread with a degree of voracity that spoke of long fasting. Ginger ate with his elbows on the table—nay, with both his arms and hands forming a jealous barrier round his food, just as the brown bear at the Zoological Gardens encircles with his paws the meal of biscuits the keeper throws to him in his den. As he munched each greedy mouthful, his fierce eyes marked the next in the crisp crust, and in the luscious cheese that yielded but too faint a resistance to his grim semicircle of teeth. I can't say how much that half-cheese weighed, probably thirty pounds; but it was evident that Ginger had promised himself that he would eat the whole of it, and the spasm of pain it caused him to see me help the other two was ludicrous to behold. Eventually, however, even nature could be no further constrained; and he announced himself at his patron's service.

'I am nine and a half,' said the blacking boy, 'and I lives in Playhouse Yard, in Whitecross Street. It ain't a house, at least it ain't a house what you goes indoors to, with tables and chairs and that, and a fire.' 'Ah, ah!' from Ginger; 'no, there ain't much room for furniture in Billy Taggs's house, but it's very comfortable, and wot's more, it's regler. It's a barrer'—'a baker's barrer,' poor little Taggs hastened to explain—'one of them with a lid. He lets me sleep there, and I watches out for the cats.' 'For the cats?' 'It's down a yard with gates to it where the barrer is, and the baker he keeps breeding-ducks and pigeons there, and the cats come and nail 'em o' nights, and when I hears 'em I gives the lid of the barrer a histe, and down it comes with a whack, and they are off like a shot. I ain't got no mother, I've got a father; I sees him sometimes. He don't live up my way; he goes to fairs and that. I ain't got no brothers. I've got a sister, she's in the hospital. She used to work up Mile End way, at the lucifer factory, till she got the cank·r making on 'em. She's been in the hospital this ever so long. That's why I don't sell "lights." I can't bear the sight of 'em. I haint been ill a long time, not since the middle o' summer, when I had the measles. No, I didn't sleep in the baker's barrer then. Of course there *is* hard times. Once a policeman took away my box, blacking and all, cos I cheeked him. It was more'n a week before I could make another start. I washes myself sometimes, not often; I ain't got no towel and soap. Never was locked up; certny *not*. Don't I think I should be better off in the workus? No, I don't

want to be shut up anywheres. I am all right. I don't want nobody to be looking arter me like that, thanky all the same, mister. No, I can't read, nor write neither; I never was in a school, Never was in a church. I don't like to be shut up anywhere. I'd a jolly sight rather go on as I'm a goin'.' And so he retires to collect his blacking out of the fender with a dismal foreboding that he may miss the promised job and shilling after all.

The experiences of the fusee boy were common-place compared with those of his predecessor. He was better off than Billy Taggs, for he lived in 'reglar lodgings,' and had a mother, 'a lushin' fightin' sort of woman (as Ginger interposed), who was wuss than a scalded cat to them about her when the drink was in her.' 'I'd rather be without a mother than have a oner like her,' said the red-haired boy; 'there's him and his two young brothers and his sister wot sells buttonolers (flower-sprigs for the button-hole), and she grabs all they earn, and gets drunk with the money, and punches them about orful cos they don't bring her more. Their only good time is when she is in quod. She is there now for twenty-one days, for 'saultin' a policeman on Christmas Eve. Good job if she was dead. Yah! yer young fool!' continued the ferocious Ginger, as the small pale boy raised to his dirty eyes his dirtier cuff; 'he always snivels when you tell him that.' As to his food, his treat was at night, when he sometimes had a 'jolly stew,' made out of 'bits and ears, what they scrapes off the insides of the skins and the ears of the bullocks; stunnin' stew it makes with a ingun and a few taters. You buys it in lots. Them wots got the privilege cuts 'em off, and makes saps of 'em on the pavement, about a couple of pounds for twopence.'

To the cigar-light boy I put the same questions as to the blacking boy: 'Did he ever go to church?' 'No.' 'To school?' 'No.' 'Could he read or write at all?' 'No.' 'Ah, but he can do something wots a lot better!' exclaimed Ginger, with an admiring glance at his young friend; 'he's a fizzer on the whistle.' 'On the whistle?' 'The tin whistle—don't yer know?' and taking up a long piece of bread-crust from the table he made on it the motions of a flute-player, after which he put it in his pocket. There must have been something more than empty flattery in Master Ginger's eulogium of his friend's whistling powers, for the little pale boy brightened up wonderfully.

'My name is John Galloper,' remarked the red-haired boy, before he was asked the question. 'And how do you get a living, John?' 'You don't want to hear no lies, mister?' 'Certainly not.' 'Then I don't get a living at all; I lets the living get itself.' 'But you must either provide for yourself or somebody provides for you; which is it?' 'It's a kind of mixshure of both, I suppose,' returned John Galloper, with a laugh; and, after a little reflection, 'it comes somehow; I don't trouble myself.' 'How old are you?' 'Older than you may think,' answered John Galloper, with a wink of a middle-aged horse-dealer; 'I'm thirteen last birthday.' 'And you do no work?' 'I ain't above a job if I tumble across it.' 'Sometimes you beg?' 'Per'aps *you* might call it beggin'.' 'Sometimes you steal?' 'Oh! come, yer know, you're a comin' it a little too hot now. It's a mixshure I tell you you'd better call it a mixshure, and say no more about it.' 'I tell you

what, my young friend,' I said, 'it seems to me that unless you alter your ways there can be little doubt as to what the end of all this will be.' John Galloper broke off a bit from the purloined crust in his pocket, and calmly masticated it as he looked up to the ceiling. 'You'll become a convict, and sent to drudge in misery to the end of your life in some stone quarry.' 'Ah, all right,' said John Galloper, evidently growing restless; 'we'll see about that when we gets there.'"

Yet, after all, these are but specimens of what may be found any day in a city which boasts of its civilisation. But we leave this sketch with one question—What would become of this class were there no Ragged Schools to take them kindly by the hand, and point them to Him who not only bears our sins but our sorrows?

Poet's Corner.

GETTING BY GIVING.

See the rivers flowing
  Downwards to the sea,
Pouring all their treasures
  Beautiful and free.
Yet to help their giving
  Hidden springs arise;
Or, if need be, showers
  Feed them from the skies.

Watch the princely flowers
  Their rich fragrance spread,
Load the air with perfumes
  From their beauty shed.
Yet their lavish spending
  Leaves them not in dearth,
With fresh life replenished
  By their mother earth.

Give thy heart's best treasures—
  From fair nature learn;
Give thy love, and ask not,
  Wait not a return:
And the more thou spendest
  From thy little store,
With a double bounty
  God will give thee more.

ADELAIDE A. PROCTER.

Teachers' Column.

SURFACE-ISM.

SURFACE-ISM is the tendency of poor indolent humanity. It is so much easier to work round the *outside* than it is to dig down, that this poor world has always been afflicted with surface work. The surface family is a large one.

We now write only of those who are in Ragged School work. One member of this gilt-edged family teaches her class most daintily, hears their verses, utters a few general remarks, very appropriate, very suitable for "dear young people," her words falling melodiously from a honeyed tongue,—and that is all. As for any vigorous effort to *get hold* of the deeper nature of the scholars, to get into the holy of holies, the heart, as for any earnest attempt to conquer the child's nature for Christ, there is none of it. Earnestness does not run in the family. And yet Miss Surface is perhaps an influential teacher, is regarded as a most exemplary teacher, is moulding the character of the young. The superintendent feels obliged to consult her. She really thinks herself doing a noble work. And yet how empty, how vain is all this patronising trifling! How will God strip off this fair outside and show the shameful waste of golden opportunity, the utter hollowness of the pretence!

And there's Mr. Superintendent Surface. He has nice hymn-books, beautiful arrangements, careful classification. All these things good superintendents like. But Superintendent Surface revels in them, lives in them, never goes beyond them. He can tell the distance from Dan to Beer-sheba,—but the distance from his scholars to Christ does not enter into his thoughts. He knows the depth of the Dead Sea,—but he never dreams that his popular school is the deadest of dead seas. His bell-ringings are exact, his drill is perfect; and he is considered a pattern superintendent. But his teachers' meetings have no tender, contagious zeal in them, no children's meetings are held, few of the scholars are ever converted, because neither effort nor prayer is expended in that direction. His school is a flourishing one—like the fig-tree on which the Lord Jesus found "nothing but leaves."

Brother Surface makes no allowance for individual peculiarities. He has a new patent double-acting process, and he feels no doubt of its suitability to any school and any superintendent. It looks beautiful on paper, and why should it not work well? The effect of Mr. Surface's labour in a teachers' meeting is twofold. In the first place, he directs attention altogether away from the spiritual work to the phylacteries of the Sunday School. In the second place, he disheartens simple-minded people by the perfect unattainableness of his plans.

Lest any one should take these remarks as personal, we may state that the family is large and widely scattered.

PLAIN IT A LITTLE MORE.

A MINISTER had long preached to the same congregation without much apparent good result. It was a source of deep grief of soul to the good pastor, who longed to see sinners converted. When studying on the matter one Saturday morning, after he had finished writing his sermon, the thought occurred to him, "Perhaps I shoot too high; I will go down, and see if Betty can understand it." Betty was a pious servant-girl.

He went to the kitchen, and called Betty to come and hear his sermon. She hesitated. He insisted. She came. He read a few sentences, and asked her, "Do you understand that?" "No." He repeated the idea in simpler language, and asked her if she saw it. "I see it a little,

minister." He again simplified. She saw it more clearly, and showed deep interest, but said to him, "Plain it a little more." And once more he simplified. Then she exclaimed with ecstasy, "Now I see it; now I understand it." He returned to his study and re-wrote his sermon in the simple style that Betty could understand.

On Sabbath morning he went to church fearing and trembling, lest his people should be disgusted with his sermon, but fully resolved to try the experiment. He preached it. All was attention as never before. Many eyes were filled with tears, and sinners began to cry out, "What must I do to be saved?" He changed his style of language thenceforth, and the Lord blessed his labours abundantly.

"Plain it a little more." Study the word. Talk *with* children, as Jesus did, of sheep, and lambs, and hens, and chickens, and sparrows, and lilies, and all the homely scenery of common life.

Draw your bow *on your knees*, and may God speed the arrow in its flight to some poor sinful heart.

Children's Gallery.

PRAYING AND DOING.

"BLESS the poor children who haven't got any beds to-night," prayed a little boy just before he lay down in his nice warm bed on a cold windy night. As he rose from his knees his mother said, "You have just asked God to bless the poor children; what will *you* do to bless them?"

Freddy thought a moment. "Why, if I had a hundred cakes, enough for all the families, I'd give them some."

"But you have no cakes; what are you willing to do?"

"Why, when I get money enough to buy all my things that I want, and have some over, I'll give them some."

"But you haven't half enough money to buy all you want, and perhaps never will have; what will you do to bless the poor now?"

"I'll give them some bread."

"You have no bread; the bread is mine."

"Then I can earn money and buy a loaf myself."

"Take things as they are, now; you know what you have that is your own: what are you willing to give to help the poor?"

Freddy thought again. "I'll give them half the money. I have seven pennies, and I'll give them four!"

"Four pennies would not go far towards making a child, so poor that it had no bed, as comfortable and as well provided for as you are. Four pennies towards food, and clothes, and books for such a one, and three pennies just for pencils and candy for yourself, don't seem fair."

"Then, mamma, I'll give all my money, and I wish I had more to give," said the little fellow, as he took his good-night kiss.

Are there not older ones who ask God to bless a suffering world, yet seldom, if ever, think of lending a hand to the work themselves—whose prayers cost less than labour or alms?

The professing Christian prays, "Bless the heralds of the truth, and grant them success in their holy efforts. May the knowledge of the gospel of life spread through the whole earth!" A good prayer; but prayer must be connected with doing. "Faith without works is dead, being alone."

What will you do, my praying friend, to bless the heralds of truth in Ragged

Schools? How much money will you give towards that support which is necessary to their success? How many gospels of life will you pray for and send abroad into the regions of death? How many destitute will you help?

ELLA.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL HORSE.

A HORSE, called "Robert Raikes," carried his master, Mr. Stephen Paxton, missionary of the American Sunday School Union, over 64,000 miles. If this amount of travelling had been in a straight line it would have extended almost three times around the world. He thus helped to organise over 700 new Sunday Schools in Missouri and Illinois.

He had become so accustomed to his master's stopping by the wayside to talk to children, that during the last years of his service it was almost impossible to drive him by a group of children. He would stop until his master would say something to them and distribute some papers or tracts—then he would willingly jog on.

He had also learned to distinguish a school house or church from any other building, and would always, unless checked in time, turn aside to visit it.

He lived to a good old age, and when he died, was not unmourned, as the following letter from a daughter of Mr. Paxton will show:—

"Dear Father,—I sit down this pleasant afternoon to tell you of the death of your faithful old servant 'Robert Raikes.' He had been declining gradually for the last six months. We have not had him harnessed more than once all summer. He ate two ears of corn on Friday last, and on Saturday night died in the clover lot. While looking at the remains of this faithful creature, I could not but ask myself the question, 'Am I as faithful to my Heavenly Master as he has been to his earthly one?'—Your affectionate daughter, MARY."

All who read this short account of the long service of this faithful horse will see that, as he was a Sunday School horse, he was named after Robert Raikes, the honoured man who was the founder of Sunday Schools.

Editor's Note-book.

SEARCHING QUESTIONS.

SOME of us a few years ago were thrust out by God to his work. We made many mistakes; but God worked. We began in the Spirit; are we finishing in the flesh? It is not a new thing now; evangelists are getting recognised. But there seem to be fewer men of God.

We are exhorted to put off the old man, and to put on the new. Let us not grieve the Holy Spirit. We shall all be on our guard against filthiness—but what about *foolishness?* The danger of these days is the corruption of Christianity—the taint of earthliness—the gradual introduction of a lower tone, instead of our being full of power with God. The true worship of God was corrupted by Jeroboam, not altogether set aside—"It is too far to go to Jerusalem; worship here at Bethel." Corruption is coming into our evangelistic work. It has got too much to be mere talking; there is a lack of real coming forth from the presence of God. Elijah said, "As the Lord God liveth before whom I stand." We must stand before God, to have power with God.

There is the conviction of a coming blessing—the sound of abundance of rain.

Are we ready for the first moving of the Holy Ghost? Are we so delicately sensitive to his voice as to be ready to obey his whispered word? Are we vessels purged from profane and vain babblings? from *powerless religious talk*? The golden vessels were always in the sanctuary—are we always there?

Over and over again blessing has come to a place; the people of God were not ready, and the blessing passed. Are we so waiting in the presence of God as to be ready when it comes? There is no danger of our being cast away for life, but great danger of being, as workmen, disapproved.—*Lord Radstock at Clifton Conference.*

MIDNIGHT MUSIC.

It is related of George Herbert, the quaint old poet, that once in a walk to Salisbury to join a musical party, he saw a poor man and a poorer horse that had fallen under his load. They were both in distress, and needed present help, which Mr. Herbert perceiving, put off his coat and helped the poor man to unload his horse. The poor man blessed him for it, and he blessed the poor man; and was so like the good Samaritan that he gave him money to refresh himself and horse.

On his coming to his musical friends to Salisbury, they began to wonder that George Herbert, who used to be trim and clean, came into that company so soiled and discomposed. But he told them the occasion; and when one of the company told him "he had disparaged his calling by so dirty employment," his answer was "that he thought what he had done would prove music to him at midnight; and that the omission of it would have upbraided and made discord in his conscience whensoever he should pass by that place. For if I am bound to pray for all that are in distress, I am bound, so far as it is in my power, to practise what I pray for; and let me tell you, I would not willingly pass one day of my life without comforting a sad soul, or showing mercy; and I praise God for this occasion."

Oh, how many might have the anxious thoughts which infest the midnight hours changed into sweet music, if they would only be seen, with full hands and friendly words, in the abodes of poverty and suffering! For such scenes attune one's conscience to midnight harmonies.

THREE DAILY LESSONS.

Remember these three lessons:—

1st. Learn to love, for Jesus loved you.

2nd. Learn to give, for Jesus gave himself for you.

3rd. Learn to deny yourselves for others, for Jesus denied himself for you.

Correspondence.

HOW CHILDREN MAY HELP RAGGED SCHOOLS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Sir,—As I am sorry to perceive from your pages that some Ragged Schools are in danger of closing for want of funds, I would beg to ask if children have been asked to help their poorer brothers and sisters? For how much might be collected if the children all over England would join together and form a *Children's Ragged School* Aid Society.

I may give two cases in point. Thus one evening, as a little sweep was

running along the street, a big sweep met him and shouted to the little fellow, "Hallos Jack, where are you going in such a hurry?" Little Jack said, "I am going to the Missionary meeting, I have got a share in the concern, and I want to go and see how things go on."

This little sweep was in a Sabbath School, and was a subscriber to the Missionary Society, hence he said he had a share in the concern, and was going to see how things went on. Are there not many children in respectable families who have no share in the concern of the Ragged School Union. Let such learn from the little sweep their duty, and immediately enjoy the privilege of becoming shareholders in this honourable concern.

Another instance will show what may be done by "Littles."

A gentleman inserted the following in a missionary magazine: "About three years ago I circulated an address to children inviting them to contribute to the missionary cause, and proposed the sum given should not exceed one halfpenny at a time from each child. I am thankful to say my little friends liked the plan. I have collected upwards of *three thousand five hundred halfpence*, or more than seven pounds."

The sum may not appear large, but much may be done with it, and if the dear children give from love to Jesus, we know our loving Saviour will accept it.

Yours, &c.,

ELLA.

[If in response to these kind suggestions any of our younger readers should be led to desire to help Ragged Schools, they can readily do so by applying to the Secretary of the Ragged School Union, 1, Exeter Hall, who will gladly supply collecting boxes. In this way they can materially aid Ragged Schools, without the trouble of forming a new society.—ED.]

Facts and Scraps.

DRUNKARDS CURED.—Mr. Robertson Gladstone, brother of the Premier, a member of the Liverpool bench of magistrates, has initiated a new system of dealing with drunkards. He not only imposes very heavy fines, but he has had the names, addresses, and occupations of the delinquents, together with the addresses of their employers, collected, with the view of having them published in the local newspapers.

HOW GAMBLING IS TAUGHT.—James Smith, of Edward Street, Stepney, was charged at the Thames police-court with allowing gambling to take place in his shop. It appeared that the defendant kept a small roulette-table, which he called a "dolly," and enticed children sent on errands in the neighbourhood into his shop, where he induced them to stake the pence which they had on the table. In this way he made a living, and the place having been watched by the police, he was now brought before the magistrate. Mr. Lushington ordered the "dolly" to be broken up at once, fined the defendant £3 and costs, and told him if he or any one else came there again on such a charge the full penalty would be inflicted.

STEPNEY GREEN.—The large open space known as Stepney Green having of

late fallen into a neglected condition its enclosure has been the subject of considerable agitation. At the instance of the Mile End Old Town vestry the Metropolitan Board of Works have consented to expend £3,000 in converting it into a place of recreation and a flower garden for the use of the public. The work is being rapidly proceeded with, and the ground will be ready for the reception of the public early next spring.

HALF A MILLION FOR THE POOR.—At the Social Science Congress at Leeds, on Monday, Mr. G. Godwin said:—Much good remained undone for the want of its being known how best to do it. In confirmation of this, he mentioned that he had for some time been authorised by an inhabitant of London to state that he is willing and ready to appropriate to the improvement of the health and condition of the poorer classes of the metropolis a sum equal to that given by the late George Peabody for a similar purpose, or say, half-a-million of money, when he can see a mode of satisfactorily effecting this, without fear of pauperising the classes he seeks to benefit. Means were taken to make this offer known to a limited extent, and a large number of suggestions have been sent to the proposer, but he is not yet satisfied as to the course that can be wisely taken.

[Would not public recreation and playgrounds meet the wish of this noble philanthropist?]

PRESERVED MEAT TRADE.—We venture to think that the growth of the preserved meat trade of this country is far in excess of the most sanguine popular opinion. The imports into the United Kingdom in 1866 were valued at £321; in 1867 they were £18,820; in 1868 they were £45,746; in 1869 they were £80,385; in 1870 they were £203,874; in 1871 they were £550,000. The last total is estimated as regards one out of the twelve months, the December returns not yet being completed. The pounds weight of preserved meat received this year is no less than 22,000,000. One fact will show the value of Australian preserved meat. At the Manchester Gaol Sessions a report was read from the surgeon, in which that officer recommended the use of Australian preserved meat in the prison. He reported that the saving upon the present price of fresh meat would be forty per cent., while the food would be quite as nutritious as English meat.

TEMPERANCE HOSPITAL.—An effort is being made to establish a temperance hospital in London. The promoters of the scheme state, it is believed, that a hospital in London for the treatment of disease, apart from the ordinary administration of alcoholic liquors, "would be characterised by special economy, reduced rate of mortality, and a more rapid recovery of the patients, and would thus prove of signal advantage to the temperance reform." It is proposed that £1,600 a year should be provided to defray the cost of the constant occupation of twenty-five beds, equivalent to the treatment of 400 patients annually; and it is computed that for this sum many thousands of outdoor patients would also receive medical necessaries and advice gratis. A provisional committee, comprising some of the leading temperance reformers of the metropolis, has been formed, and already about £900 has been guaranteed for preliminary expenses, and some £500, as annual subscriptions, for at least three years.

MANCHESTER SCHOOL BOARD.—A return presented to the Manchester School Board shows that during the past six months there had been 8,000 children on the School Board books, and the amount of fees paid was £723. The Church of England schools received £400 of that amount, the Romanist schools £235 [!!] and other schools £68.—*The Rock.*

Notices of Meetings.

DRUID STREET, BERMONDSEY.

THE twenty-fifth annual meeting of the above was held at the Bridge House Hotel. The chair was taken by the Lord Mayor.

The report—read by Mr. W. Penny, the secretary—showed that from 1858, when the schools were altered from Sunday to Ragged Schools, there had been an average daily attendance of 250 children. During those years 4,400 boys, 2,750 girls, and 1,800 infants—in all 8,950—had been admitted, while 854 boys and 792 girls had left for situations; 137 had received prizes from the Ragged School Union, and 16 had become teachers in the Sunday School. The average attendance was 301 daily, and was marked with more regularity than in any previous year. The Sunday Night School had an average attendance of 147—a number which, owing to the scarcity of teachers, was less than that of previous years. The Monday Night School and the Children's Church were also progressing. The children's and parent's Library was extensively used; but owing to the scarcity of books the committee could not supply the requirements. They hoped, therefore, that assistance would be forthcoming in this direction.

The receipts amounted to £121 16s. 2d., and the expenditure to £136 10s. 1d., showing a balance against the treasurer of £14 13s. 9d. The collection exceeded £35.

WALWORTH.

THE annual meeting of the Walworth Young Men's Christian Mission was held on January 29th. W. McArthur, Esq., M P., presided.

The report read by the hon. sec., Mr. Wood, stated that the number of tracts distributed in the neighbourhood by members has been 33,970. One friend makes a special effort amongst cabmen with some success. Another visits the low lodging-houses of the Mint, Borough, and there has found his labours blessed of God. Cottage Meetings.—The meetings at "The Pollards" were continued till the month of June, when in consequence of the little church meeting there being compelled to remove to Westminster, and the inability through other engagements of the superintendent attending the meetings, they were discontinued. But services are being held in Lock's Fields and we hope to increase this branch.

Ragged School.—Short Street, with an average attendance of about 140 children, and 9 teachers, is entirely supported by the Mission. In some few instances the teachers have hopes that their work is being blessed. Some are inquiring the way of salvation.

Open-air Services.—Services have been held in Lock's Fields, and two members studying at Rawdon College have, with other students, at the suggestion of the committee, been preaching in the villages, as well as teaching in the Sunday Schools. Another friend labouring in the country districts reports that through God's blessing on his labours two have found Christ. Foreign Missions.—£15 has been set aside for this purpose, and a special grant has been made to Mr. C. Jordan (a member of the Mission) who is labouring in India. Special Services have been held for young men. Dulwich Iron Chapel.—Since last report, a church has been formed and the cause is prospering, and we hope soon to replace the temporary with a permanent structure. Sick Visitation.—158 visits have been paid, and four conversions through God's blessing been the result.

The meeting was addressed by Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, W. Howieson, Mr. E. J. Hytche, and Mr. H. Tresidder.

Papers, Original and Selected.

RAGGED SCHOOL PRAYER MEETINGS.

Of the temporal success of Ragged Schools who can doubt? But were there any remains of that scepticism which met the promoters at the outset of the movement, the 737 scholars who were publicly rewarded last month for good service, as well as the 368 licensed shoeblacks who form a notable feature in our leading thoroughfares, would put the caviller to silence.

Nor are such successes merely metropolitan, or confined to Great Britain; for wherever Ragged Schools have been planted they have been found equally successful in saving social waifs and strays. Thus, whether they have been established in Italy or Spain, in Egypt or Lucknow, they have rescued hundreds who would otherwise have perished through vice or starvation.

Yet, after all, it was not the idea of social reclamation that *forced* our 3,351 voluntary workers into this branch of service. Not merely to save from workhouse or jail do they penetrate noisome alleys and pestilential dens, for the mere philanthropist, did he care to undertake the task, might mitigate these evils. No; their one aim has been to win souls for God, and thus, if the phrase is permissible, to co-operate with Jesus in filling heaven. If, then, such startling social benefits have followed in the wake of Ragged Schools, that fact but confirms the promise of our Divine Master, "seek ye *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be ADDED unto you." Thus out of the greater has sprung the lesser, and those reclaimed for God have been equally restored to society.

But what is the secret of such startling successes? Surely not mere giving or teaching could have wrought these wondrous social and spiritual results. No; to something higher we are disposed to trace the source of our strength in the great battle with social vice and misery. For the promise of success is nowhere in Scripture given to mere givers or even to workers—however needful they may be as links in the chain of blessing. Hence the promise of

Jesus is not, Work and ye shall receive; but rather, "*Ask* and ye SHALL receive." Wherever earnest supplication accompanies work for Christ, success becomes a certainty, for have we not a Divine pledge which cannot be broken, and to the truth of which church history bears wondrous attestation?

It is in recognition of this fact, that prayer precedes blessing as cause and effect, that the Ragged School Union framed its seventh rule—namely, "*all* its meetings shall begin and end with prayer." At every Committee this rule is rigidly adhered to; nay, by a long-standing rule, the first hour of its first yearly meeting is devoted to earnest supplication for the work and the workers. Nor do we doubt that the wisdom which has marked most of its steps in advance is due to thus seeking the Source of all true wisdom, nor can we hesitate to affirm that the harmony which has characterised its meetings is mainly due to the brotherly spirit induced by such united communion with our Heavenly Father.

It is this belief in prayer as a necessary link in God's providence which has led the Committee of the Ragged School Union to request the teachers of the affiliated Schools to hold a Special Prayer Meeting on the Sunday prior to the Annual Meeting of that Society. To this appeal we are glad to say the connected Ragged Schools have eagerly responded. The benefit is twofold; for not only does the *tone* of the work of the coming year greatly depend upon the key-note struck by the speakers at that anniversary, but teachers learn practically a fact they are liable to forget, that, belonging as they do to a great missionary corporation, they are "members one of another."

But, even more than this, most Ragged Schools sanctify their labours on the Lord's-day by prayer at its close. Thus by the last report of the Ragged School Union we find that 108 schools hold such Prayer Meetings statedly. The average attendance is very large, being not less than 2,600.

Some Ragged Schools, indeed, in addition hold Prayer Meetings on Saturday evenings, with a view to the labours of the coming day. And we cannot conceive a happier gathering, or one more likely to bring down that Divine power without which all teaching must be in vain.

Nor can we omit another fact in this brief *résumé*, namely, that the majority of our Sunday Schools invite the elder scholars to remain at the Prayer Meeting. We shall not easily forget one

at Jurston Street at which seventy of the poorest girls of the New Cut remained; for nothing could exceed their decorum, and most refreshing was it to hear their quiet but earnest "Amens" at the close of each prayer. Whether any after-fruits spring out of their presence we do not think it desirable to state, for we think much harm has been done to Christ's cause by the premature publication of cases of child conversion, which should rather have been subjected to the test of time, to see whether mere natural feelings were alone excited, or if it were really a work of the Holy Spirit. Happily, with such Biblical instances as those of Josiah and John the Baptist, we can have no doubt that child-conversion is a blessed fact. But so far as their presence at the Teachers' Prayer Meeting is concerned, it must have a salutary influence, for thereby they will be taught a lesson for life, namely, that their teachers really yearn for their salvation, and that for this—the crown of all religious teaching—they trust in no arm of flesh.

But even more than this, in some Ragged Schools *Scholars' Prayer Meetings* are held. For example, once a week the elder boys of Druid Street, Bermondsey, and the elder scholars of Lancaster Street, meet for prayer and Christian conversation. No one is called on to pray by the teacher who presides, but those who feel so disposed lead the prayers of their fellow scholars. Those who conduct such Scholars' Prayer Meetings speak of the child-like faith displayed, the contrition and reverence which mark their confessions, and the full belief manifested that Jesus is present to answer their petitions. One feature is always observable, that however short the prayer—and they are invariably very short—they are never indefinite, but always *ask for something*. With such direct prayer we doubt not that, like that of Eliezar of Damascus, in Gen. xxiv. 12—21, direct prayer meets with a direct answer.

A kindred meeting was recently held by Brook Street Ragged School, namely, a PRAISE MEETING. At this novel gathering the labourers there, some for above twenty years, met to thank the Source of all good for the many conversions which were traceable to class teaching or the collective addresses. Might not this precedent be profitably copied by every Ragged School? Surely every Ragged School that has prayed earnestly has had abundant cause for praise. We honour God as much by praise as by prayer; nay, it is written "they that offer praises *glorify* God."

But home duties or other inabilities preclude many from joining the Teachers' Prayer Meeting; yet even they can unite in the weekly concert of prayer. Suppose one evening were set apart for this purpose, say, for example, some hour on Saturday evening, between nine and eleven; this would answer every purpose. For though separated as regards localities and persons, it would still be *one* Prayer Meeting. Thus gathered for the same purpose in the "name above every name," they would find Jesus true to his promise, "If two of you shall agree (by prior concert) on earth touching *anything* they shall ask, it shall be done for them by my Father who is in heaven."

The results of such a Prayer union who can estimate? In the history of all genuine "Revivals," one fact is always traceable, namely, that they commenced in a concert of prayer began by a few persons who really yearned to win the world for Jesus. So was it in Bible times (Ezra i. 5), and so was it with the Irish revival of 1860. Hence we believe that if our 3,351 voluntary workers, and the equally large number of supporters of Ragged Schools at home and abroad, would pray for Ragged Schools, at the same hour on some fixed day, the answer to Daniel's prayer would be found a pre-illustration of our blessings—"At the *beginning* of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to show thee" (Dan. ix. 20—23). For such united petitions to the God of all grace would be akin to that of Jacob, who ultimately prevailed with the wrestling angel of the Covenant because he was too much in earnest to be denied.

"Go thou" then "and do likewise," and doubt not that the reapage of 1871, great as it was, will be but as gleanings when compared with the fuller harvest of this year.

SOUL-WINNING.

BY REV. T. L. CUYLER, NEW YORK.

Some one inquired of Dr. Lyman Beecher in his old age, "Doctor, you know many things, but what do you think the main thing?" The sturdy old hero of forty revivals answered, "It is not theology; it is not controversy; it is *saving souls*."

This is *personal* work. Each man and woman must be a fisher. It is a great mistake to suppose that a whole church can lay hold of a huge drag-net, and draw in at a single haul "a multitude of fishes." This is an *individual* work upon individual hearts. The pastor must do his part in the

pulpit and in personal interviews. The Sunday School teacher must take hold of his pupils one by one.

The Christian who would win Harlan Page's success must adopt Harlan Page's method, and that was to try to do *some good to every one he met*. Sometimes it was only a kind but impressive word; sometimes it was a faithful private conversation: sometimes he wrote a letter to the unconverted, inviting to the Saviour; sometimes he did a kindness to unlock the heart, and then followed it by a close appeal.

A great many crude things have been said about the "machinery of revivals," but there is one sort of machinery as old as the apostles, and which never wears out—it is the simple method of personal effort, prompted by love. The Acts of the Apostles are not a history of churches, but of *individual Christians*. The fishery for souls was not by a combined pull on an ecclesiastical drag-net, but each fisher dropped his own hook, baited with *love*. We emphasise this last pithy word. Souls must be *loved* toward Christ. He that *winneth* is wise. Cutting words to the unconverted are only the foolish attempt to bait flies with vinegar. "Truthing it in love" is the literal reading of Paul's method, which he commends in his letter to the brethren at Ephesus.

Our all-wise Master never would have won Zaccheus over by denouncing him as an extortionate publican. He did win him by personal attention. When the man whom all Jericho was in the habit of kicking at found at last a friend, who had a "fellow feeling" for him, he opened his heart to Him. Christ "went to be a guest with a man who was a sinner." He not only got into that sinner's house, but into his heart.

Whenever I think of *winning* souls to Christ, I recall the history of a beloved friend, who, thirty years ago, was a wretched waif on the current of "fast living" (which really means fast dying). The reckless youth seemed abandoned of God and man. He spent his nights in the buffooneries of the dram-shop, and his days in the waking remorse of the drunkard. On a certain Sabbath afternoon he was sauntering through the public square of Worcester, out of humour with all the world and with himself. A kind voice suddenly saluted him. It was from a stranger, who touched him on the shoulder, and said very cordially — "Mr. Gough, I believe?" "Yes, sir, that's my name." Then followed a few kind words from the benevolent stranger, with a pressing invitation to "come to our meeting to-morrow night, where I will introduce you to good friends who will help you to keep a temperance pledge." The promise was made on the spot, and faithfully kept. The pledge was taken, and by God's *help* is kept to this hour. The poor bootmaker who tapped that youth on the shoulder has gone to heaven. But the man he saved has touched more hearts to tears than any other living man on the globe. Methinks, when I listen to the thunders of applause which greet John B. Gough in vast crowded lecture-halls, I am only hearing the echoes of that tap on the shoulder under the elms of Worcester. "He that *winneth* souls is wise."

PENDLETON WORKING MEN'S RAGGED SCHOOL.

It is some years since Ragged Schools were added to the social and spiritual machinery of the growing manufacturing town of Pendleton, Lancashire. Like most factory hives, it has a large population, always in extreme destitution if not in a state of semi-starvation. Not rarely this springs from the periodical panics incident to such towns, but it is as often caused by too early and improvident marriages or vicious habits, especially love of strong drink. Thus there has grown up many social waifs, who, like their coevals in similar hives of industry, tenant dens and hovels which put to shame our boasted civilisation.

For this class, two Ragged Schools are busily at work, and are as popular and as useful as are the schools of London. The one whose operations we propose to describe is unique so far, at least as its large staff of workers is concerned. It has been our privilege often to see the nearest relatives of dukes and earls, and the wife of one Prime Minister, the Countess Russell, teach in London Ragged Schools, and thus practically show their belief in the grand Bible truth, that we are "members one of another." But the Ragged School held in the Hall, John Street, Pendleton, can boast only of "nature's nobility," managed and taught as it is mainly by manual labourers. We could well wish that other Christian workmen would imitate this bright example; for as they know the special sins and sorrows of the destitute classes from almost hourly contact, they can point most powerfully to Him who not only bears sin but sorrow.

The history and operations of the Pendleton Working Men's Ragged School may be thus summarised.

Early in 1863, about one hundred members of various religious bodies entered heartily into a scheme for the special benefit of the industrial classes of Pendleton, particularly those who seemed the lowest in the moral scale. It was perceived that while very many of them frequented the public-house, only a small proportion attended any place of worship. The Lord's-day, the Bible, healthy secular reading, and thrifty saving habits were much neglected. Thus it was that the Pendleton Working People's Association was commenced. Entirely unsectarian in its character, it sought by a union of effort on the part of Christians of all denominations to do good by such operations as the following, which have not been in vain.

For several years, from 1,500 to 2,000 cottages had a selection of religious, temperance, and practical tracts or publications lent each week. Each year there has been from 500 to 700 members, who have had monthly a kindly visit by a friend, who has left a copy of the *British Workman*, which, with admission to monthly temperance or other lecture, and annual tea, they have had for the small charge of 2d. per month. A large number of Cottage and Open Air and Sunday Night Services were held; frequent visits to the sick were paid, and food suitable for them largely distributed, while latterly, in winter, many nourishing dinners have been given to poor children.

To supply a want much felt, and to both centralise and enlarge the work, having special regard to the young, a large hall in John Street was erected, and the estimated cost (£1,800) was subscribed.

The Hall, since it was opened, has been as thoroughly used as it well could be for the purposes for which it was intended.

A German teacher (four years resident in England) conducts a free Kinder Garten (infant's garden) School for very young children. The attendance is 170.

The Sunday School has a winter attendance, 350 to 530. There is a Band of Hope, attended by 400 to 550. Many thousands of Gift Tracts have been distributed; for last two years alone 44,000 tracts, and Scripture motto slips 26,600, have been circulated. Free Night Schools, weekly, are also held with nearly 200 scholars. Also Mothers' Meetings, and Penny Bank (deposits last three years, £487 14s. 9d). The Reading and Instruction Rooms, and Gymnasium, attract about 100 persons. There are Provident and other useful Societies. During the last two years the ground floor of the late Ellor Street Ragged School has been used on Sunday. Not unfrequently the two schools have had over 750 children in attendance on Sundays.

As some indication of the extent and nature of the work, since 1863, it may be mentioned that the outlay has been£250 to £400 yearly, and no small part has been for tracts, printed addresses, and publications, which were sent to working-class homes, to most of which neither city missionary nor minister had access. The Penny Bank has taken a deal of money which otherwise would have gone to the beer-house, while the comfortable nightly Reading, Recreation, and Coffee Rooms, especially on dark winter evenings, have proved a counter attraction to the public-house and other objectionable resorts. Though billiards, bagatelle, dancing, and unsuitable entertainments are excluded from the Hall, chess, draughts, pictorial and other books, newspapers and the gymnasiums are found sufficiently attractive. Many youths also avail themselves of the facilities thus afforded, which is cause for satisfaction, considering how beershops, music halls, theatres, &c., are open to this class. Such temptations have a very baneful influence, particularly as regards young persons. Thus those arrangements of an opposite kind, and which provide suitably for the moral wants of the more destitute, attracting as they do both children and their parents—should, we think, meet with hearty support.

The teachers hold most strongly that as regards children, youths, and young women, especially those of the poorer class, in so many of whose homes only evil example and much intemperance prevail, more facilities for improving and enjoying themselves than now exist are needed. Valuable as Sunday Schools are, it is painful to know how large a proportion of the scholars have gone to make up the intemperate, irreligious, law-breaking class. Hence, as both supplementary and in themselves of real value, a cheerful Service for the Young, with Bible teaching and addresses easy to understand, is held each Sunday night, and also in the middle of the week. One or two evenings weekly for simple Night School instruction, in the hands of those who have at heart their highest welfare. Regular Christian Temperance Band of Hope Meetings, so that the habit of total abstinence is formed, with good reading to take home.

A good number who through their poor clothing, &c., at first would only come to those meetings, afterwards became regular attenders at Schools and

places of worship in the neighbourhood. About 100 were thus drafted off during the last two years, and the teachers heartily rejoice to find that their humble meetings act as feeders to the neighbouring churches and chapels.

May the operations of our Pendleton friends be blessed a hundredfold, and their Ragged Schools and kindred operations help to dissipate the moral "darkness which may be felt."

PRIZE SCHOLARS' MEETING.

On Tuesday, March 13th, the nineteenth annual gathering of the Prize Scholars of the Ragged School Union was held. The Earl of Shaftesbury presided. He was supported by the Hon. Mrs. Pelham, Rev. H. Doolan, J. E. Matthews, R. J. Simpson, and F. White; Drs. Cross, Cumming, and Ellis; Messrs. J. Lawrie and Norman McLeod; the Committee of the Union, &c.

After tea, the Rev. J. E. Matthews opened the meeting with prayer.

Mr. Gent, the secretary, then read the following statement:—

The present is the nineteenth annual distribution of prizes to the servants who have been scholars in the London Ragged Schools. On the first occasion the small hall of this building was large enough for the purpose, and there was then more room to spare than on this in the great hall. On that occasion the number of prizes distributed was 144, while to-night it is 737, all of which have been awarded in strict accordance with the rules laid down for the purpose. Those rules are far more restrictive than those at the beginning of the scheme. These restrictions have been adopted from time to time as required by circumstances. And notwithstanding the increased stringency of the rules, the members have increased nearly sixfold.

The Prize Card given to-night has been designed by Mr. Wyon, of Regent Street, who has most kindly made a die and stamped each card with an excellent embossed likeness of the President, the Earl of Shaftesbury. The printing of the card has been done by an artisan who had himself been a Ragged School boy, and as such formerly took one of our prizes at the hand of our noble chairman.

All who come up to-night for the first time take one of these cards and a money prize of 7s. 6d., while those who have in previous years taken the money prize will have a card and a volume of the value of 5s. The boys' book is "Captain Cook: his Life, Voyages, and Discoveries," by William H. G. Kingston; and the girls' book is "The Shepherd of Bethlehem," by A. L. O. E. We are enabled, without altering our rules, to give volumes of this value by the generous help of the Religious Tract Society, and of Messrs. Nelson and Sons, both of whom kindly allowed us to make selections from their stocks at half price. This develops our promise of half-a-crown into a book of twice that amount.

The number of prizes for the first fourteen years averaged 580 yearly, and to-night the number is 737. This number is less by thirty-three than last year, but considering the great changes that have been going on in the schools in consequence of the Education Act and School Boards, our friends are somewhat surprised to find the diminution is so small.

The pleasant rivalry noticed last year of the girls keeping so well abreast of the boys has apparently not lessened in interest, although there is a diminution of their majority over the boys. The year before last the girls were fifty ahead; last year they were forty-one, and to-night they are only twenty-nine in excess. It is to be hoped the girls will remember these declining figures, and that the boys will not forget them.

The applications for these prizes have been made by eighty-four schools. There were 766 applications from these eighty-four schools—viz., 372 boys and 394 girls, and so carefully had the conditions been acceded to that out of the whole number only twenty boys and nine girls had to be finally considered as ineligible. Of the prize-holders on this occasion 463 come up for the first time, while 274 have in former years taken the prizes some three or four times. A letter received this morning from a well-known lady, Miss Adeline Cooper, states that "one of our lads has been five or six years in his situation with first-rate character, and is now a Sunday School teacher at the 'One Tun.'" Of the twenty-nine cases that failed to pass, the chief cause was the unsatisfactory attendance at the Sunday School. Some of these, however, have been so well conducted as to lead the local friends to supplement our plan and award prizes on a separate footing.

The application papers show that—

410	have kept in one place	from 1 to 2	years.
181	,, ,,	2 to 3	,,
86	,, ,,	3 to 4	,,
39	,, ,,	4 to 5	,,
21	,, ,,	5 and upwards.	

The same papers also show their ages, viz. :—

59	are from	12 to 13	years.
143	,,	13 to 14	,,
219	,,	14 to 15	,,
165	,,	15 to 16	,,
126	,,	16 to 17	,,
25	,,	17 to 18	,,

It is believed that the awarding of these annual prizes is a means of continuing the teachers' kindly influence over the boys and girls long after they have gone into service. It also tends to break up roving habits. It cultivates a willing submission to consecutive labour; and above all, it helps to impress the mind of the value of a good character. The help or influence given was at a time and under circumstances when most required. And though that help was but a trifle, yet Tupper tells us "Trifles lighter than straws are levers in the building up of character."

The Committee, therefore, feel justified in continuing the scheme, although in the bulk it involves a considerable expenditure. But if that expenditure tends to promote industry, to encourage rectitude in the discharge of daily duty, and to cultivate respectful behaviour, that expenditure they believe to be a good investment of the funds placed at their disposal by a generous and sympathising public.

The noble President then briefly addressed the meeting. He said:—My

children, do not be alarmed that I am going to give you a long address, for I will not stand between you and the lecture to which you are about to listen. I need only repeat what you all know—how heartily I love you all, as I have done for the past thirty years. My wish, then, is that you may all succeed in this world, but above all, in the world to come. But I have also a few words for you who are looking on. I cannot too much express my satisfaction with the Ragged School system, for the results of which you have only to look around you. Never in any country, nor in any age, was such a spectacle witnessed as we see to-night. The Ragged School system is one which could not be accounted for on any philosophical principle, but must be looked upon as a special interposition of Almighty God for the rescue of some of his most forlorn and destitute creatures. When we see what has been done, and is doing, amongst these classes, we are sure that no Government scheme of education could have furnished such striking results. During the past thirty years we have rescued 200,000 children in London from the streets and put them into honourable service. And with what results? Look around you and see the 737 taken from a class that must otherwise have sinned—have died and been forgotten. Now, what has effected this change? The Gospel of Christ alone. Take heed, then, that you do not let the Word of God be excluded from your schools; hold your own against every new-fangled system which would keep the Bible out of school, and work earnestly so long as God gives you strength to labour, and the class exists for which Ragged Schools were founded.

The noble lord then delivered the prizes to the scholars, who marched past him, headed by the flags of their school, some of which were inscribed with pertinent Bible texts.

The Rev. Frank White, of Chelsea, gave a series of illustrations on the "Parables." The views, which were well brought out by the oxyhydrogen lime-light, were painted expressly for this lecture. Beautifully executed, they were marked by Scriptural fidelity in their details, and almost told their tale without the lucid interpretation of the lecturer.

The prize scholars sang several hymns in the course of the evening in a spirited manner. Need we say that they sang well, seeing that the heart was in their song of praise?

WORKING MEN'S CLUBS.

THE discussion on Working Mens' Clubs is a good preliminary to the consideration, in which we must engage with earnestness shortly, of the larger questions of drinking-houses and licences. We are evidently on the eve of a social revolution, for the partisans of extreme views will not submit to any patchwork, and the promotion of sobriety is the question of the day. The workman's club was projected in the first instance as an antidote to the public-house, and it has only partially succeeded because a substitute rather than an antidote was wanted; and the club has proved so utterly distasteful to the majority of working men, that they not only avoid but despise it, and too often entertain towards its promoters feelings that are strongly tinged

with suspicion and ingratitude. This is to be regretted; but to indulge in regrets will not help the movement, and the best we can do in view of the "situation" is to probe the causes of the failure, and redraw the scheme for future action. Thoroughly as the subject appears to have been sifted in the columns of the *Times*, it is far from exhausted, and one point at least has not obtained attention. However, there has been no lack of earnestness of knowledge, of breadth of view, of political wisdom, of generosity. In the annals of the working classes, the recent discussion on Working Men's Clubs will constitute a most instructive and, possibly, a brilliant and prophetic chapter.

The clubs were for the most part initiated and inaugurated, and in great part supported, by "friends of the working classes." Sectarian differences were set aside, and the clergy of the Church of England were found working with Nonconformist ministers and members of the Society of Friends with a heartiness and goodwill worthy of so good a cause. If we judge their work by its immediate results, we are bound to say that it has failed. If we judge it by an estimate of its probable ultimate effect, we must record our belief that its fruit is yet to come, and that time will grandly develop the good seed that has been sown. As an institution capable of expansion and adaptation, the workman's club is undoubtedly a *fait accompli*. As an agency in operation, or say an antidote or substitute, it is scarcely better as yet than an hypothesis or, at the best, a model; for the few working men who make use of it are as but a handful of sand compared with the interminable sweep of sand that constitutes the shore of the ocean. It may be said that 800 clubs have been formed, and 500 remain, and we may conclude that 250 are flourishing, and then ask, What are these capable of accomplishing for the whole body of the artisan and labouring classes?

"A landlord's hold," strongly advocated by more than one writer in the *Times*, has been kept over the clubs by their patrons, and the landlord's hold has, in many instances, crushed them. The landlord—that is, the committee of patrons—has felt bound to determine at what hours the club-houses should open and close, what refreshments should be provided, what games should be allowed, what kind of furniture should be provided, and the kind of committee that should be entrusted with the management. In very many instances they have found a certain goody-goody class ready to appreciate their efforts and encourage them in acts of patronage, and they have felt that a good work had been begun. But the working classes kept aloof, the goody-goodies were generally too few to sustain the affair, and partial or complete collapse supervened. There can be no mystery in the case. There was no real freedom, and there was *visible* patronage; and the working classes, for whom the club was provided, preferred to continue their visits to the public-house.

The best place for the married workman, when his day's work is done, should be his home. In some instances we know that good wives and snug firesides will not win men from the public-house. But many British workmen are much in advance of their wives in knowledge, conversational power, and ability in household management. For one working man's wife who can cook a chop or steak to perfection, we should probably find half a dozen

men who could do the same thing. Boys have better schooling than girls, boys are encouraged, girls are snubbed. If the workman of the future is to be a better man than the workman of the present, we must provide a help *meet* for him, and the surest way to that object is to be found in a sensible system of female education. It is to escape from a miserable home that many a workman becomes a frequenter of the tap-room, and, eventually, a drunkard. There, at all events, he is sure of a fire, a chat, perhaps an hour of merriment, and oblivion of care. If he cannot obtain these comforts at home, will the club provide them, and thus constitute itself a substitute for the public-house?

The workman's club should combine the features of the cheap coffee-house with those of the ordinary public, and present them in a more complete and satisfactory form. Every downright impropriety, whether in the shape of bad language or practical joking, must be prohibited; and this, of course, will be equivalent to closing the doors against the class that is most in need of reformation. But, short of downright wrong-doing, the club should be perfectly free; and the only proper arbiters of the line of demarcation between freedom and licence are working men themselves. Working men may be persuaded, but they will not be lectured, or frowned, or forced into sobriety.

It is with pain that we repeat our accusation against the temperance organisation, that it has done nothing of a positive character for the working man. It has provided him with speaking in dirty rooms, but not the means of cooking and eating a steak. If a tenth part of the money that has been expended on the production and distribution of pamphlets had been expended in providing snug substitutes for public-houses, with all their freedom, minus their temptations, we might not now be in a state of bewilderment as to what should be done to ensure a general practice of sobriety. As it is never too late to mend, those who still consider themselves the "friends of the working classes" may take some useful lessons for future practice from the considerations we have thus hastily suggested.—*City Press.*

MUHLHEIM RAGGED SCHOOL.

A DEPUTATION from the Sunday School Union recently visited the Sunday Schools of Germany. One object was to interest the clergy of Germany in Sunday Schools, as far too many—especially the Lutheran—object altogether to laymen engaging in any kind of evangelistic work. In this we are glad to find that, if not entirely successful, they prospered far more than might be expected from the strong clerical prejudices with which they had to contend. Amongst other schools, they visited a small Ragged School lately opened at Muhlheim, on the Baden side of the Rhine. The deputation state:—"We went to the low part of the town; threading our way down a street, where the sewer ran on the surface, to a house let out in tenements, and up a staircase—which we wished some one had been responsible to repair—to a room on the third-floor. There we found two out of three sisters: young women who were getting their living by sewing, and

teaching sewing to those who received instruction in the public schools where sewing was not part of the education. They had a sort of Ragged Sunday School in their large room on Sunday. They told us, with tears of joy in their eyes, that "the Lord had been very good to them, and had given lately a soul for their hire;" one girl had given her heart to him, and they had hope of others. These humble labourers were happy in their poverty, and even made clothes for their children to enable them to come to Sunday School. It was twelve o'clock and dinner hour; the dinner (a large bowl of potatoes) was ready on the table when we entered. We made a small grant to assist in buying Bibles."

This is, we believe, the first Ragged School established in Germany. Small as it is, that it may become the parent of many similar schools is our believing prayer.

OLD MEG THE RAGPICKER.

As the grey dawn of a November day was breaking over the city of ——, some twenty years ago, a light streamed from the window of an old lodging-house in Manchester Street. The room from which it came was the dwelling-place of "Old Meg," the ragpicker, and her little son Willie. For seven years she had been an inmate of the same room, and nearly every morning, at an early hour, she went forth in search of rags, and her little son went to his place of employment in the town.

Willie was a bright-faced, curly-haired little fellow, of thirteen years, and was the hope and pride of his grey-haired mother. Willie's mother, "Old Meg," as the boys used to call her, was only forty years old; but her road through life being rough, and her burdens heavy to bear, she looked much older. Everybody in the neighbourhood knew her to be an honest, God-fearing woman. She troubled nobody; and since her husband's death, some ten years before, had worked hard to support her little son, and let him receive as much education as possible.

On the morning in question, she was up at the usual hour, and her scanty meal was spread for herself and Willie. The room in which they were living was not very large, nor was the amount of furniture extensive; but everything had the appearance of the most scrupulous neatness. After they had been seated at the table a few moments, and Willie's mother had asked a blessing, Willie said: "Mother, you must let me go and gather the rags to-day. I have a holiday, and you do not look well. I know the rounds, for you know, I used to go with you often before I went to work for Mr. Williams."

"My son," said his mother, "this is the only holiday you have had for six months, and I would not like to take it from you."

"Never mind, mother; I am young, and don't mind work. You won't have to go out many more mornings, for Mr. Williams is going to raise my wages soon, and then I shall make enough to keep us without your working." And the little fellow's eyes beamed with pleasure at the thought of his mother not working any more.

"Well, Willie," replied Mrs. Matthews, "you may go out in my place to-day, and I will rest."

Willie soon finished his breakfast, and taking the bag and hook, kissed his mother's pale cheek, and with her kind "God bless you!" following him, went down the rickety stairs and out into the chilly autumn twilight, to commence his search for rags. By noon, Willie had nearly filled his bag, and was on his way homeward. As he was passing a millinery shop, he saw some scraps lying by the side of the kerb, which had been swept from the shop, and setting his bag down, he began to gather them up. He had them nearly all picked up and put into a heap, preparatory to putting them in his bag, when something lying close to the side walk attracted his attention. He stooped down and picked it up. What was his surprise to find that it was a pocket-book, and, to all appearance, well filled! Willie opened it, and one look at its contents caused his heart to leap with joy. Sticking it quickly in his pocket, he shouldered the bag, and started as fast as he could toward home. As he trudged along with his bag on his back, he pictured his mother's surprise when he should tell her what he had found, and show her the pile of money which he knew the pocket-book contained. He soon reached home, and setting his bag down by the door, fairly flew upstairs, threw open the door, rushed into his mother's presence, and exclaimed: "Oh mother! I've found a fortune!" Without waiting for his mother to speak, he pulled out the pocket-book and commenced to count the money. "Two hundred pounds!" he exclaimed, when he had finished counting the roll of bank-notes. "Isn't that a fortune, mother?"

"Where did you get it, Willie?" said his mother, quietly.

"I found it in among some rags in front of a millinery shop," answered Willie, looking at the pocket-book. "But here's a name, mother," he continued, as he raised the fly-leaf. "It is 'Horace Carpenter, No. —, —— Street.' But he must be rich, and will not miss it, and we need it so badly."

"But, my son, it would be stealing to keep it, so you had better take it to its owner, and if he does not reward you, God will."

Without a word of remonstrance, Willie rose, saying, "I will do as you say, mother, and if he offers me a reward, I will not take it."

"Go, then, my boy, and God prosper you," said his mother.

So off he started for the shop of Mr. Carpenter. When he arrived there, he asked if Mr. Carpenter was in. On being told that he was, he said that he wanted to see him. A shopman went to a side door and called him, and in a few moments he entered. Willie stepped up to him and said: "Are you Mr. Horace Carpenter?"

"Yes, my little fellow. What can I do for you?"

"Take this pocket-book, and see if it is yours," said Willie, as he handed it to him.

Mr. Carpenter took it, and, without opening it, said: "Yes, my boy, that's mine. It was lost by my daughter while out yesterday afternoon. I had just written an advertisement to insert in the morning papers concerning it. But why did you bring it to me? You look as if you needed money?"

"My mother bid me take it to its owner, and I never disobey her."

"You shall be rewarded for your honesty, my little boy. But what is your name, and where do you live?"

"My name is William Matthews, and I live in Manchester Street."

"I will go home with you," said Mr. Carpenter, "and see your mother, and perhaps I may do something for you and her." They went out together—the rich shopkeeper and the ragpicker's son—and were soon at Willie's house.

After a short talk with Willie's mother, it was arranged that he should go into Mr. Carpenter's warehouse the next week. In the meantime, a more comfortable place was provided for him and his mother by Mr. Carpenter.

Time passed on, and Willie fast won the respect of all in his new place. When he reached his twenty-first year, he became a partner with Mr. Carpenter in his great warehouse.

"Old Meg," the ragpicker, is no more, and the kind-hearted Mr. Carpenter sleeps in the old family burying-ground among the green hills of his native county. But Willie remains, and you would scarcely recognise to-day, in the handsome gentleman entering the warehouse of "Matthews and Co.," the ragpicker's son.

FRUIT-BEARING CHRISTIANS.

No attentive reader of the Bible can have failed to notice how much the subject of *fruit* is spoken of in it. The great object of that book, and the end to be accomplished by all that is written in it, is "fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life."

In the first psalm we have the beautiful picture of an evergreen tree laden with fruit in its season, and are told that this is a symbol of the "blessed man," fulfilled perfectly only in His character and ways of whom so many of the psalms testify, even Jesus, the Man of sorrows and the Man of God's right hand, the blessed and the blessing One.

It is also fulfilled in degree in all who really abide in Him, and walk as He walked. The prophet Jeremiah probably had this beautiful picture in his eye when he gave a similar description and made a similar contrast (Jer. xvii. 7, 8). In this last passage, the blessed man who is like the fruitful tree by the river of waters is said to *hope* and *trust* in the Lord; while in the first psalm he is said to "*meditate* in God's law day and night." The result in both cases is much fruit and much beauty. This will be the case with all who rest in the Lord, and are rooted in the truth; who mix faith with the word by earnest meditation.

The Lord Jesus dwelt much on this point of *fruit*, and both Himself and His forerunner used the figure of a tree with regard to the fruitful and the fruitless. The Saviour, when speaking of Himself as the true vine, insisted on the necessity of constant abiding in Him in order to true and abundant fruitfulness. The apostle also speaks of being "rooted in Him," in order to be filled, like a noble tree, with the fruits of righteousness, "which are by Jesus Christ to the praise and glory of God." There can be no real fruit

without union to Christ; and there is no proof of being thus united unless there is fruit.

This holiness must be manifested towards God and man.

As regards acts of liberality, or "doing good to all men, especially to them that are of the household of faith," we are told that "God loveth a cheeeful giver;" and the apostle desired "fruit that might abound to the account" of all such large and liberal hearts.

Every community of Christians associated together for worship and work may be compared to a tree, and should be beautiful and fruitful, attracting many to its shadow, and blessing them with its fruit. The differences and divisions of Christians should indeed lead to searchings of heart, as to who is right; to earnest prayer for Divine guidance, and to a willingness to renounce whatever God's light and truth discovers to be wrong; also to take up at once, and at any cost, whatever has written on it by a Divine hand,—"Do it." Different bodies of Christians may choose different fields of usefulness; some may choose to give to one object, and some to another. We should be careful not to judge one another, or harshly exclaim, "There is no fruit here," if we do not see our favourite schemes upheld, or our pet societies subscribed to.

There are three questions which may be lawfully asked respecting any community which claims to be a church of Christ. Are they a holy people? Are they a loving people? Are they labouring for the salvation of perishing sinners, and the spread of God's truth near and far?

A community of mere hearers and talkers does not deserve the name of a church, nor will Christ own any as "His peculiar people" who are not "zealous of good works."

"With golden bells, the priestly vest,
And rich pomegranate bordered round
The need of holiness expressed,
And tell of *fruit* as well as sound."

Poet's Corner.

UPON THE WATERS.

Upon the stormy waters
The seed of life we cast,
With cheerful trust believing
It shall be found at last.
We see it but a moment,
Far drifting o'er the main;
But deathless, undecaying,
It shall be found again.

One eye shall ever watch it,
The eye of Him who sees
Each tiny seedling, scattered
By summer's passing breeze—

That eye which sees the coral,
As year by year it grows,
And counts the myriad crystals
Of Himalayan snows.

Sometimes with bitter weeping
The seed of life is sown,
With well-nigh hopeless pleading,
Only to Jesus known.
With hope deferred the mother
Oft looks upon her child;
No plant of heaven is springing,
Though weeds grow rank and wild.

The shades of evening gather
Upon the Sabbath sky,
From pastors and from teachers
The prayer ascends on high.
Once more their hands have broken
The true and heavenly bread;
Let them believe not vainly
The table has been spread.

Yes, on the stormy waters
We cast the bread of life;
Vain are the surging waters,
Vain is the tempest's strife.
His never-failing promise
Jehovah will fulfil,
And the seed be found in glory,
When those proud waves are still.

Teachers' Column.

CARRYING THE LAMBS.

At a recent conference of the South London Auxiliary of the Sunday School Union, which includes most of the larger Ragged Sunday Schools, the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon gave the following hints on how to carry Christ's lambs.

He said the thought to which he desired to direct their attention was that in which the great Shepherd was described as carrying the lambs in his bosom. As under-shepherds, they must int his way make him their exemplar. There was a distance which imagination could not bridge between the Infinite and an infant, but yet love had bridged that distance, and the Eternal and Almighty cares for "the lambs." The thought should animate teachers to great carefulness in the mode in which they performed their work. They were doing no second-rate or minor service in the house of God, but a work which was the delight of Him whom the angels worship, whom cherubim and seraphim adore—the head of all the hosts of heaven. It is not written that he bids the angels carry them, although they care for the least of God's people. He delegates not the service to pastors, parents, or

teachers, though the work which they do with this aim is his work; but he himself gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them in his bosom. The Sunday School teacher who attempts to do duty by proxy, seeking merely to fill up time in the class, and trusting to the address at the close for influence upon the children, would signally fail. Neither let them be satisfied that there were conversions in the school; they should rejoice in this, but they must pant for the conversion of their own scholars. It is said He "shall" gather them, "shall" carry them, implying that He is always doing this. It would be an unhappy thing for the Church of God if the Saviour only saved on the first day of the week, and it was the teacher who hunted seven days a week for the souls of his scholars who might expect the reward.

The custom used to be always to finish a sermon with a practical conclusion, but Mr. Spurgeon found, he said, that the sinners had learned to expect this, and got themselves ready for it. So it was with children; they composed themselves on Sunday to receive religious advice, and it produced but little effect upon them; but if the teacher could catch them at other times, and drop in a word when they were not looking for it, the desired blessing might be expected. Let those who were only one-day teachers remember that their Master on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, as well as on the Lord's-day, "carries the lambs in his arms."

One reason why the Saviour takes such an interest in the lambs is because he is himself a lamb, the "Lamb of God." He is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities;" in the days of feeble flesh he knew the temptations of children of poor parents, and knows how to deal with them. We all teach best when we are children, not in the folly of childhood, but in its beautiful simplicity. There are some who are only *half*-converted, and who never become as little children. Christ does not fret over them, and declare they are "naughty little things," but he *carries* them.

Let not teachers despair of the work if they think they have the stupidest set of children, the most wilful boys and the giddiest girls a teacher ever had; even suppose such was the case, let the teacher remember that he has fine raw material. The Master does not put every clumsy workman to such a work; it is a piece of work, and let the teacher prove by his earnestness that the Master was wise in setting him to work on that particular piece. Instead of being depressed about the wilfulness or weakness of the lambs, let the teacher lift them in the arms of love and carry them to Christ. If the lambs cannot or will not walk, the great Shepherd does not leave them behind; if the boy is wilful let the teacher give to him double gentleness and patience; where he finds it necessary let him spare the child all the toil and even the mental effort which might be good enough for others. In teaching, one of the two—the teacher or the taught—must work. Let the teacher seek out illustrations, find the proof texts, and come to his class with everything prepared for his children, and then it will be pleasant for them to listen. In the Bible-class his course will be different; there he should do as little as he can, and stimulate his scholars to do as much as they can. Although the teacher could not repent or believe for his children, he could take their sins before the throne of grace, and plead for them as for his own sins, and oftentimes the believing teacher has had his faith rewarded.

Christ carries the lambs "in his bosom,"—in the place of love. The new-born lamb needs food, but its chief want is warmth. Children need doctrine, and he he would have them grounded in the elementary doctrines of the Christian faith, but beyond all this they want love. The

children should not be taught in a heartless, catechism sort of way, but must be made acquainted with and attracted by the great love of Christ.

He carries them in his bosom because they are precious to him. Let everything be done in real love; if rebuke was necessary, let that be given in love. Let the teacher check the complaint that the children are exceedingly tiresome, and there is nothing lovely in them, by remembering how much harder it was for Christ to have loved him.

God Grant to them patience, perseverance, and love, to continue in this work, that when the great Shepherd should appear, they, as under-shepherds, might appear with him in glory.

HOW TO SPLIT THE ROCK.

A MINISTER preached a number of years in a certain place without any visible benefit to any one. Finally he concluded it was not right for him to preach, and, in consequence, thought he would give up.

While musing on the subject he fell asleep and dreamed. "I dreamed," he said, "that I was to work for a certain man for so much, and my business was splitting open a very large rock with a very small hammer, pounding upon the middle of it in order to split it open. I worked a long time to no effect, and at length I became discouraged, and began to complain, when my employer came.

Said he: 'Why do you complain? Have you not fared well while in my employ?'

'Oh! yes.'

'Have you not had enough to eat?'

'Yes.'

'Have you been neglected in any way?'

'No, sir.'

'Then,' said he 'keep to work—cease your complaints, and I will take care of the result. He then left me.'

I then thought I applied my little hammer with more energy, and soon the rock burst open with such a force that it awoke me. Then," says he "I ceased to complain—I seized my little hammer with a new vigour—I hammered upon that great rock (sin) with renewed energy, nothing doubting, and soon the rock burst. The Spirit of the Lord rushed in, and the result was a glorious ingathering of souls to the heavenly Jerusalem.

Thus you see, O brother, that to persevere in well-doing is the sure way to gain the prize."

Children's Gallery.

TRUE BEAUTY.

ONE bright and pleasant afternoon I watched Rose Mayfield, and saw her with her simple frock and plain hat leave the village and go along the dusty road to where blind Mary lives.

What a pleasant meeting it was when Mary left off knitting, and took the hand of Rose and said, "God bless you!" And Rose talked and cheered her, and by-and-by the old Bible was opened, and the dear girl read of Jesus and his love. She was *eyes to the blind.*

And then another day I saw her give a cup of bright clear water to a beggar man, yes, and a trifle of money too. I have known her go many a mile for the lame man at the other end of the town, *feet* to the lame and *eyes to the blind.*

What are all the good looks in the world to a beautiful soul, a kind heart, and a cheerful spirit? Man looketh at the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh at the heart.

Try to be like Rose, to fill your mind with beautiful thoughts, and your heart

with love and kindness—to make your life a beautiful life; such beauty never fades. Bright eyes grow dim, and the hair turns grey, and dimpled cheeks grow wrinkled. But a beautiful soul grows better and better every day, and shall one day, through the merits of Jesus, be in the paradise of God. ELLA.

A FATHER IN THE SKY.

IN her new work, "No Work, no Bread," the author of "Jessica's First Prayer" gives a thrilling narrative of two Whitechapel orphan boys. The father, who was out of work, and what was still worse, out of bread, was taken to the workhouse, where the newspapers chronicled he died of "starvation." The boys were attendants at George Yard Ragged School. What occurred after their father's death is thus narrated:—

"When that was over, they went back to their only home, and their only friend, the school in Whitechapel, and its master.

It was during school hours, as it had been when Bob first knocked at the door. The floor was crowded as usual with ragged scholars, standing in their classes, and learning their lessons with a busy hum. But when the door opened, and Bob came in with Andy, both of them crying bitterly, there was a general silence. The scholars knew what had happened; and the boys were now well known, and favourites in the school. There was a general movement to meet them, and one of the girls ran forward, and put her arms about them both, drawing them in to a seat near the fire, while the other children crowded around them. She had been kind to them before; and Andy laid his head upon her lap, sobbing violently.

'Hush, Andy!' she said, tenderly; 'we know poor father 's dead, but you've got another Father, as is fonder of you than he was. I've been asking him to take care of you and Bob, while you've been away, and he's certain sure to do it. Bob, don't you cry, now; you've got another Father, I'm sure of it. I'll find it for you in the Bible.' She could scarcely keep back her own tears from blinding her as she turned over the leaves of her Bible, while many of the boys and girls who had gathered round were sobbing aloud.

'Look! I've found it!' she cried; 'you just hearken, both of you! Here it is: "A Father of the fatherless is God in his holy habitation." That's heaven, you know. God in heaven is a Father of the fatherless. Look for yourself, Bob; it's here as plain as plain can be.'

Bob wiped his eyes with the back of his hand, and followed the girl's finger as she pointed out the words slowly, for he could not read very well yet.

'God loves you more than your own poor father did,' she went on; 'and he'll know how to take care on you. So you must never, never, never be wicked boys. Don't you remember what "Mother" says, in "Mother's Last Words;" how it says:—

"So never join with wicked lads
To steal, and swear, and drink, and lie,
For, though you are but orphans here,
You'll have a Father in the sky."'

The master had been standing behind them, where they could not see him, with tears in his eyes, yet with great gladness in his heart; for this poor, ragged, half-starved street girl was showing herself to be one of Christ's little ones.

'Yes,' he said, when she was silent, 'Andy and Bob have a Father in the sky, and he will know what to do for them. Come to me, little Andy.'

Andy had been a wild, restless child before, always trying to steal out into the streets, and run to look after his father. But now, after one long look into the master's face, he ran into his open arms, and clung fast to him. And from that moment until a new home was found for him he followed him about everywhere, unwilling to leave him for a minute. The boys went down, a day or two after, to the cemetery at Ilford to follow their father's coffin to the grave; two lonely, almost friendless, lads, made orphans by

famine in the rich streets of London! It was a poor grave, and a rough coffin, with no band of mourners surrounding it, and the only epitaph written upon it was a record in the daily papers of—'Another Death from Starvation.'

What remains to be told is full of hope for the future. In a street close by the school, there is a large Industrial Home (Miss Macpherson's) open to receive any destitute child who seeks a refuge in it. It is adapted to the rough little ones who enter it; where their first roughness is rubbed off, and their lawlessness brought gradually under restraint. There is no uniform to mark them as Refuge children, but they wear clothing sent for them from real homes—clothing made for, and worn by, happier children, before it comes down to the use of the city arabs. The beds they sleep in are hammocks hung up in their schoolroom. The life is a step or two upward, but not too great a change from the old one.

The first roughness rubbed off, and the sifting of the hopeful from the positively hopeless having taken place, the boys are drafted off to a training home in the country, where, for a few months, they are taught such farm-work as city lads can learn. After that, there opens for them a third home, far off, in a very land of promise for them, where thousands of such young emigrants are welcome—in Canada, where children are no burden either on the family or the State, but a blessing to both. There the little barefooted and ragged nuisance of our streets, shooting up so swiftly into crime and danger, is gladly taken into some decent household, and cared for and reared as an adopted son."

Facts and Scraps.

VINEGAR GROUND RAGGED SCHOOL.—A large party, consisting of parents, friends, and the committee, assembled in the Ragged School-room, Vinegar Ground, on the evening of February 21st, in honour of the birthday of Lady C. Sturt. After a substantial tea, music, recitations, and speeches of no mean quality diversified the evening. The Sturt family are well known in Hoxton by their munificence, especially for educational purposes. Sites for schools and churches have been given, and in this case the building itself was erected by their liberality. Lady Sturt's health, proposed by Mr. Ansell, seconded by Mr. Aldridge, and supported by Mr. N. J. Curtis, was received with great enthusiasm. The drum and fife band belonging to the school gave evidence of their good training. It was very clear from the general tone of the evening that the name of Sturt will long hold its fragrance in this locality.

ABERDEEN MEDICAL MISSION.—Dr. Thomson Crabbe gives a cheering report of the progress of this Mission. 2,542 new patients have been treated, as compared with 2,361 last year, and 12,710 visits have been paid to and by the patients. During the year rarely a week passed without some token of the working of God's Spirit, which resulted, in many cases, in their being savingly changed. The poor of every religious denomination in the city came for medical aid. Many of them knew the Saviour; many knew a good deal about him—having the form, but denying the power; and many required instruction in the simple plan of salvation. All, at least once, in many cases as often as twenty times, heard the simple truth of salvation by Christ. But the influence extended further, for Dr. Crabbe endeavoured to get the most ignorant to attend the Sabbath forenoon prayer-meeting, which is open entirely for the poor in their

everyday clothes. The average attendance at the gathering was from ninety to one hundred.

Boy Gambling.—Not only in sweetmeat shops, but by other tradesmen, boys are initiated into the vice of gambling. This will appear by the following police case which occurred on January, 24th ult., when a shopkeeper of Stepney was convicted at the Thames police-court of having encouraged a number of boys to gamble in his place of business. He was fined £3, and his roulette box was ordered by the magistrate to be destroyed.

Drink Traffic.—In the financial year 1870-71 347,723 Excise licences were granted to dealers in and retailers of excisable liquors used as beverages in the United Kingdom; the amount of duty charged was £1,297,541. The number was made up as follows:—To publicans there were granted 87,262 licences for retailing beer, 97,252 for retailing spirits, 46,379 for retailing wine, and 24,625 occasional licences. There were 47,555 licences granted to beer-shop keepers; 4,892 licences to retailers of wine to be consumed off the premises, and 3,207 to retailers of wine in refreshment houses; 399 licences for retailing beer, &c., in packet boats; and 500 spirit licences to grocers in Ireland. There were 6,608 licences granted to dealers in beer, and 4,092 additional licences to retail; 6,561 licences to dealers in spirits, and 3,546 additional licences to retail; and 4,331 licences to dealers in wine. There were 122 licences to makers and dealers in "sweets," and 10,392 licences to retailers. There were also granted 32,707 licences to brewers, 5,323 to maltsters, 312 to distillers and rectifiers, and 6,501 to refreshment houses.

Foul Water-closets.—It is common to hear people say, "I think we shall have rain, for the drains smell badly;" and they are proud of their prognostication when the prediction is verified. What does that mean? asks the *British Medical Journal*. Only that the vaunted "syphon water-traps" are useless; and that the sewer-gas, being in a state of tension, escapes as the barometer falls, from diminution of the atmospheric pressure. This little household sign is one which it may be well to bear in mind, even after the impression produced by recent discussions shall have died away, as, we fear, it will too soon for the public health.

Newspaper Sensationalism.—In the course of a recent speech the Bishop of Manchester remarked that there was a peril to religion from that morbid love of sensationalism which now so much prevails. He was afraid the newspapers had a great deal to answer for in this matter. In America they adopted the practice of having great bold letters about the events of the day, and the newspapers here seem to have fallen into the same practice. They saw a great big heading of a murder here, defalcation in a savings bank there, a magistrate taken up for this or that in a third place, and a scandal about a clergyman in a fourth place. The people ran after them and talked about them for nine days.

Muller's Homes.—The whole amount of money received on behalf of the orphans, since 1834, is £319,404 10s. 6½d. Besides the above, the sum of £126,064 7s. 6½d. has been given for the other objects of the Scriptural Knowledge Institution since the commencement of the work in 1834. These objects are Day Schools, Sunday Schools, the circulation of Bibles, tracts, &c., and missionary work at home and abroad. Thus the whole amount of the contributions received by Mr. Müller for the work of the Lord in his hands, *without asking any individual for a penny*, is upward of £445,000.

In commenting on these striking figures, well might the *Nonconformist* say—"This account would almost compel belief in Providence, if one did not come with implicit faith in it."

Prince of Wales's Cottages.—The sanitary condition of the Sandringham estate is the subject of a lengthy article

by the *Times* "Special Correspondent," in which testimony is borne to the improvements effected under the Prince's ownership. During the few years of the proprietorship of the Prince of Wales he has gone far towards removing from that part of the village over which he has control all the sources of disease, and converting it into something approaching a model village. The large number of new cottages which he has built have every comfort and every provision for health and domestic propriety. They have been built at a considerable expense, but they are let at very moderate rents. The rate of earnings has risen considerably from the increased demand for labour. West Newton has been provided with a school, towards which the Prince and Princess of Wales contribute half the cost of maintenance, besides many little encouragements in the way of school feasts, at which *they personally attend* and take their share in making the little ones happy, and also make annual gifts of cloaks. The Princess, during her residence at the Hall, comes frequently to the schools and takes a class, and the little ones are well accustomed to her kindly presence.

TRUCK SYSTEM.—While the Trades Congress at Nottingham were denouncing the truck system, and saying that every man ought to be paid for his labour in the current coin of the realm, the Truck Commissioners at Shetland were bringing to light facts which establish its injustice. Several females employed in knitting shawls, vests, and hosiery of different kinds, were examined, and they stated that none of the merchants would pay for their goods wholly in money, but insisted that they should take goods from their shops in lieu thereof. One of the knitters said that she had never been paid in money at all until the day she was examined before the Commission, when she had received 2*s.* from the merchant on account of about £1 2*s.* 6*d.* A fisherman deposed that he had for the last seventeen years been at work for a fish-dealer, from whom he had never received any money whatever. He had to accept provisions—which were both bad and dear—instead. The truck system originated in the Midland Counties, and was for a long time confined to those limits; but the revelations made so far north as Shetland leave little doubt that its existence is all but universal.

Notices of Meetings.

GIFFIN STREET, DEPTFORD.

The annual meeting of this school was recently held in King Street Mission Hall. By the report read by the hon. secretary, Mr. T. Arnold, it appeared that—

The committee had been much troubled with the uncertainty of their tenure as regards the building in which the school meets. The lease expiring on the eve of the expiry of the lease of their landlord caused some perplexity, which was increased by the fact that the next holder's lease would also shortly cease; and all this necessitated much correspondence and many meetings. They are happy, at last, to be enabled to look forward shortly to a settlement of the various questions of ownership and hiring, and believe that they can consider the fact of their continuance in the present building as pretty well arranged. The operations of the past year have been carried on with continued success; and the good done to the numerous children who have come under their influence has, it is believed, been very great. The number of children attending the Day

School has been on an average of 160. This is somewhat less than the number of the previous year, and is partly due to the prevalence of smallpox during last winter, which from fear of infection kept some children from coming to the school. The committee decided, instead of giving one annual dinner to the children, that it would be better to give a series of meals of a lighter character; and accordingly an arrangement was entered into with the Destitute Children's Dinner Society by which 100 children were dined at a small sum per head on every Tuesday and Thursday in several weeks. This boon was much enjoyed by the children, and it is believed much benefit was caused by it. The attendance at the Week-evening School has been 72; the reports of the teachers contain much that is encouraging. A steady improvement is stated to be perceptible in the scholars. The Sunday School is well attended, and it is satisfactory to be able to report an increase in the number of teachers, although to a certain extent trouble is experienced from the irregularity of attendance on the part of some of them. The Mothers' Meetings have kept an average of about 40.

The Ragged School Union prize was received by ten of the former scholars who had been twelve months in a situation.

The balance-sheet showed, with receipts amounting to £176, a balance in hand of £15 1s. 3d.

The meeting was addressed by Rev. J. M'Cormick, G. Martin, J. Pulling, R. T. Verall, Messrs. Curtis, Gover, &c.

KENTISH TOWN.

On March 2nd the annual meeting of this school was held. The report stated that the schools have been established five years, and 1,370 scholars have been registered in that period. The teachers meet the scholars on Sunday afternoon and evening; the number in attendance is good, though very irregular, chiefly owing to lack of teachers. There have been present as many as 160 young men and boys, but the average attendance for the year is 75. The books show 370 boys and 680 girls admitted to the Night Schools; the average attendance has been boys, 90; girls, 107. The Girls' Sewing Classes continue, and are valued both by parents and scholars. Twelve scholars were sent to Exeter Hall to receive prizes for having kept their situations twelve months with good character. Five of our young people have joined the Church (one in Calcutta), thus bearing their testimony to the value of the instruction; giving good cause to hope that some of the seed has been sown on good ground. Although the Day School is a younger branch of our efforts, the teachers' book registers 206 poor uncared-for children, who, were it not for this institution, would be literally on our streets. The average attendance is 110 winter, and 122 in summer. There is a Sewing Class four afternoons in the week, when a few ladies kindly come to teach the little girls plain needlework. In this there has been a marked improvement: patchwork quilts, pinafores, and a number of other garments have been neatly made, for which the children have paid three-fourths of the value by instalments. A Mothers' Meeting is held every Monday afternoon, under the superintendence of two ladies; thirty mothers reap the benefit arising from it. On the 28th June the Annual Flower Show was held. The florist who prized and arranged the plants, reported that the children had improved in their culture of the flowers exhibited. The Drum and Fife Band consists of 30 young men and boys taken from the school. Reorganised this year, it is now under the direct supervision of one of the teachers.

The expenses were £148, leaving a debt of £14 6s.

The meeting was addressed by Rev. J. Fleming; Messrs. H. Bompas, Curtis, James, &c.

Papers, Original and Selected.

CHILDREN'S CHURCHES.

ONCE it could be justly said that the "common people heard Christ gladly;" but now the problem is, How can they be best reached? Open-air Services in summer, and Theatre Services in winter, have vainly tried to solve the problem; for though they attract thousands, many more thousands, especially of outcasts, are still "conspicuous by their absence."

The most attractive plan yet adopted is that of the Ragged Church. Often in these pages have we shown the importance of our "Ragged Churches" in reaching classes who care not for the more regular forms of the sanctuary. The testimony of above fifty evangelists at a recent gathering at Lord Shaftesbury's, showed how ready the veriest outcast is to listen to the message of salvation when men with "unadorned eloquence" tell out of a full heart of the unsearchable riches of Christ. As, however, we hope shortly to refer to the subject of Ragged Churches more fully, we would now confine ourselves to a similar kind of service more recently commenced in several Ragged Schools, under the title of "Children's Churches."

Three reasons may be assigned why this movement is already so popular with children:—

Our Sunday Schools are very thinly attended in the morning. Thus last year whilst 14,241 attended our Sunday *Afternoon* Schools, only 4,067 attended that held in the morning. Now this is not always the children's fault. Many of their parents, who are fish hawkers or costermongers, do not quit their stalls before twelve on Saturday evenings; others—and this includes countless thousands—muddle their brains and waste their health in pot-houses, until, at twelve o'clock, they are turned out moneyless, or poisoned with drugged stimulants. It follows that, even if the children are old enough to wash and dress themselves, they must either attend school later, or come breakfast in hand, as we have seen hundreds do. Hence it is usually children of a more decent class who attend morning Sunday School; and thus

nothing can show a greater contrast than those who attend morning and those who belong to the evening Sunday School.

Then, again, the forms—or rather, *no* forms—proper to a Children's Church would be quite unsuited to the more regular ritual of the sanctuary. Any sermon, too, in proportion as it was suited to adults, could scarcely be even comprehended by children. This was found to be the case with the oldest and largest Ragged Church, and thus the children who attended it were either asleep or inattentive. Hence about six years ago they were drafted off into a large class-room, and a Children's Church sprang into vigorous life. Into this room they throng Sunday morning after Sunday, sunshine in their face, and many with love to Christ in their hearts! And why? Simply because they know the service was originated solely for their own benefit; and thus, to use the words of a little boy, each regards and calls it "*my* church!"

We cannot call it anything other than an effete superstition to think that it is better to invite children to attend services which are not fitted for their age or attainments, than to establish one which meets them just as they are. It is, in fact, in this way that we shall best *educate* them for the more regular services, should they reach more mature years. For when attendance at public worship becomes a habit, if not a principle, they will naturally attend it in manhood—and, even if no immediate spiritual benefit is derived, is it not always desirable to place individuals within earshot of the Gospel trumpet? It was this feeling which led that prince of preachers to the young, the late Dr. Alexander Fletcher, to preach frequently to 5,000 children gathered from the surrounding Sunday Schools. It also induced the great Genevan scholar, M. Gaussen, to lay down the professor's gown and preach to children, poor and rich, every Sunday afternoon. It likewise now leads many true ministers of Christ, of all branches of the One Church, to devote one Sunday afternoon in every month to preaching to the children of the congregation, whether they belong to the Sunday School or not.

Another benefit incident to a Children's Church is this—not more than two persons are required to conduct such a service. Thus the bulk of the Sunday morning teachers can leave the Sunday School for their own church or chapel, whilst the two brethren remain to feed Christ's lambs.

Not one of the least benefits of a Children's Church is the brevity and variety of the service. Within the compass of an

hour, three or four hymns, set to lively tunes, are sung; two prayers are offered, including petitions for the special requests of parents or scholars; a portion of Scripture is read, and an address is given which has every essential of a good sermon. So that the children, not wearied by a cold, dry, or lengthy unsuitable service, retire as fresh in feeling as they came; and they return to the service next Lord's-day with such eagerness and joy as proves that they regard it as a "feast of fat things."

It is not strange, then, that Children's Churches are becoming an important and prominent feature in the Sunday operations of Ragged Schools. Forty-one are now at work; they attract a congregation of 3,314, giving an average of 80 per service. Considering that most were opened during the past three years, this must be regarded as a marvellous success.

We have visited and addressed several of these Children's Churches, and felt, from the quiet devotion which marked the service, that the "King was there in his beauty." One remarkable feature of the youthful flock cannot be omitted—namely, the faith they have in prayer. This leads them often to request the conductors to ask God for something in which they are interested. Thus they will come up to their teacher and say, "Mother is very ill, teacher; will you ask God to make her well?" "Sister would have been here, but she has no shoes, teacher; will you ask God to give her a pair?" "Father swears and gets drunk; will you ask God to make him a good man?" Now it is clear that, like Eliezer of Damascus, when he prayed for Abraham's son (Gen. xxiv. 12—21), or Hezekiah, when he "spread" Rab-shakeh's letter before the Lord (2 Kings xix. 14), these children have learnt the great truth, that definite answers are only given by God to definite prayer. Nor does our Heavenly Father disappoint the faith of these praying ones, but they find that Christ meant all he said when he uttered those memorable words, "What things soever ye desire when ye pray, *believe* that ye receive them, and ye *shall* have them."

Nor is this all. Many prayerless parents have learnt this secret of definite prayer from their children, and thus it is not unusual for parents to send word by their children that they wish the conductors to pray for some particular blessing. This request is invariably complied with, and the answer not rarely comes in most unexpected ways; and thus these godless ones are taught that prayer is the first link in the chain of blessing.

Cases of child-conversion in these Children's Churches are not infrequent. When, indeed, was a full and a free Gospel ever preached without such fruit? Some have gone home to their Father's house leaving bright testimonies behind; others adorn the Gospel in the dismal alleys and hovels where they dwell. Some quietly talk of the love of Jesus to their companions, or bring many a young recruit to the Children's Church. How far their influence extends, who can tell? A striking case will illustrate this:—A child who attended one of our Children's Churches spoke earnestly of the love of Christ to a little companion. The father of that boy was not one of those modern sceptics who "betray the Son of man with a kiss," but was an open-speaking infidel. He would not permit his son to attend either the Ragged School or the Children's Church, lest, as he said, he should be "corrupted." And yet that little boy died rejoicing in Christ, and left an undoubted testimony behind that he had gone to be with Him who had won his youthful affections. How was this?—for he had never seen a Bible, nor heard the voice of a Gospel teacher. Why, he was led to Christ in this strange way. A little friend—one of the saved in a Children's Church—became the evangelist, and thus the old prediction was fulfilled: "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained strength."

With a fact like this—and cases of spiritual good which have already sprung out of our Children's Churches might be multiplied—need we say that we hope that no Ragged School will regard its machinery as complete which is without such a service—called by this or whatever other name is preferred? Conversion is the very central thought of the earnest Ragged School teacher, and without this our work, so far as respects eternity, would be only a splendid failure. Happily, this—the crown of our work—has not been wanting. Splendid as are the trophies of what Ragged Schools have done in socially reforming youthful outcasts, they are still more remarkable for the myriads whom they have been honoured to lead to the "feet of Jesus." Thousands more they will, we believe, be the instrument, in the hands of the Holy Spirit, in bringing out of a moral "darkness which may be felt," into the light and liberty of the Gospel. And we know no means so calculated to lead to this, the consummation of all our desires, and labours, and prayers, as the properly organised Children's Church, the conductors of which, in their earnest strivings for souls, ever echoing Rachel's words—"Give me children, or I die!"

CHRISTIAN ENTHUSIASM.

BY RAY PALMER, D.D.

It has passed into a maxim that, whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing with a will. No one was ever thoroughly successful in any important work of life who had not something like a passion for his calling. Whether farmer, mechanic, artist, man of science or letters, a teacher, or one devoted to any of the learned professions, a statesman or a sovereign, he who does not magnify his office by throwing himself into it with a genuine ardour, will reach but moderate results, though he occupy himself with his particular vocation through even a long life. The men who keep the world from stagnation; who strike out new paths, rouse others into activity, and inaugurate new eras of progress; who, in spite of difficulties, achieve great things, and triumphantly leave the monuments of their energy and genius standing admired through ages, are men who are wide-awake and full of earnestness—an earnestness in which intellect and heart are both enlisted. It is this sort of earnestness, in which far-seeing wisdom is combined with the vitalising glow of ardent feeling, that should be recognised as the true enthusiasm. It is to be carefully distinguished from the frenzy of sudden and great excitement, and from the impulsive recklessness that is often energetic in proportion as it is blind.

Christian enthusiasm, then, is that earnestness in the Christian life and work in which right purpose is instinct with Christian feeling. It is the intelligent zeal of one who loves Christ, and longs to do his will. Jesus himself, calm and self-poised as he always was, exhibited it in his whole public ministry, and expressed it when he said: "My meat and my drink is to do the will of Him that sent me." Paul described it when he wrote: "It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing." He illustrated it most signally in that wonderful apostolic career in which he outlaboured his fellow-apostles, and went unflinchingly through all manner of hardships to martyrdom itself. There must be a glorious record in the book of God of the names of vast numbers, down through the ages, who kept the vestal fire of an intense and self-devoting love habitually burning on the altar of their hearts. It has been mainly by the lives and labours of such that Christianity has been made an effective force in the world, and has steadily advanced. It is by the aggressive activities of such that she stands erect and extends her influence on every side to-day. In all the evangelical churches there are doubtless some who are truly fervent in spirit and fruitful in well-doing.

But yet, taking the great body of professed disciples together, what a painful lack of Christian enthusiasm do we see! The opposite to Christian enthusiasm is Christian conventionalism—that bondage to custom and prescribed method which begets content with ordinary measures of success and the ordinary rate of movement, and discourages Christian aspiration and enterprise. How many churches and individual Christians are held by means of this, as if in fetters, grinding contentedly in the mill of a cold and almost mechanical formalism, when they ought to be inwardly stirred

with holy impulses and putting forth free and diversified activities! Birds may be kept so long encaged as to lose both the will and the power to fly. So it would seem as if many disciples, long used to a fixed routine, have lost the appetite for spontaneous Christian effort, and no longer feel themselves able to go forth and bear their part in the great *mêlée* of life as champions for the right. Order and propriety are certainly excellent things as means: but when they are changed to ends, and become walls within which to shut up active Christian energy, so as to keep it from doing anything effectively, they are utterly perverted from their legitimate use and set in false relations. The true Christian spirit is by no means a spirit of recklessness and anarchy; but neither is it so fastidious about methods as to be content to do nothing at all, for fear it may not work precisely according to the most exquisite ideals. It will rather seize a drowning man by the hair of his head than let him drown because it hesitates to outrage the conventional proprieties.

The truth is, that but very few things in the great complicated business of Christian living can be so arranged as to move on in a fixed routine. All the circumstances, activities, and drifts of society—the tastes, habits, follies, weaknesses, perils, sins of those who compose it—are subject to perpetual change. The devil does not marshal his forces according to a stereotyped book of tactics, and put them under martinets charged to see that they always work by the same rules, and do nothing on the battle-field that would be unbecoming on a dress-parade. Because he is in dead earnest, he exhibits his intellectual power, his versatility, his manifold resources, in new movements and combinations, new stratagems and wiles, in changing his points of attack, his weapons, and his battle-cries, from hour to hour, if need be. In such circumstances, and with such an adversary, the ministry, the local church, the Christian man and woman individually, ought not to expect to do much toward making the world better, if they insist on the *statu quo*—on working always in the one conventional way. New plans and agencies, new lines of effort, new means of awakening and holding attention, fresh stimulants to thought, and fresh motive to exertion, are perpetually needed. The work of to-day is not the work of yesterday. It is not the work that to-morrow will impose.

He only, therefore, can be a successful Christian worker who is able to comprehend the present exigency, and to do promptly what it demands. Right purpose alone and moving along the beaten path may fail to do this. Right purpose all aglow with healthful Christian feeling, in other words, a genuine Christian enthusiasm, is much more likely to accomplish it. This quickens every faculty and greatly intensifies the power of attention and decision. It is broad in its views, fertile in expedients, and determined in its efforts. It supplies the steady impulse necessary to Christian enterprise, and does not soon die, like a mere occasional excitement. A person in conventional bondage is like a wheel in a groove, that may easily be blocked. One who is warned with an intelligent Christian enthusiasm is more like an eagle, that, free and unhampered, soars when and where he will. Could the thousands of well-instructed Christians in the churches, could the great body of sound and able ministers who are the leaders of the sacramental

host, rise to a glow of enthusiasm in the work of Christ in some good degree proportioned to the grandeur of the issues it involves, it cannot be doubted that the Christian cause would be seen advancing with vastly augmented speed.

Is such a thing to be reasonably anticipated? Yes. It must not only be anticipated, but realised, before the Kingdom of God can come with power. To become painfully sensible how much we need a warmer, deeper, holier earnestness—this is the first thing. To place our souls more fully under the legitimate impression of the glorious person and the redeeming work of Christ—our hearts in closer contact with the throbbings of his heart in its deep sympathy with a suffering world—this is the thing next in order. To ask more and expect more of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, so that like primitive saints we may live in the spirit and not after the flesh—may be full of the Holy Ghost and of faith—this is the third thing. All of which amounts simply to saying that we must attain to be more thoroughly Christ-like, and to exemplify in ourselves that devotion to him on which the whole New Testament insists.

Christian enthusiasm can only be produced and sustained by a living contact with God and the open vision of divine and eternal realities. It will come only with a floodtide of heavenly influences setting in on the hearts of ministers and churches, and bringing them up to a nobler type of piety. It must be looked for, therefore, in answer to prayer, in the far-reaching revival of religion through rich outpourings of the Spirit, and in more hearty and resolute personal self-sacrifice and self-devotion.

Christian reader, rest not till your own heart glows as if with seraphic fire.

CADIZ FREE SCHOOLS.

The Master's great commission, the legacy he bequeaths to his church, includes teaching as well as preaching; and in a land in which scarcely one-fourth of the inhabitants can either read or write—a land from whose public and private schools the Divine oracles of truth have been banished for ages, and where the Bible has been a proscribed book, condemned to confiscation and the flames—teaching is of almost equal importance to preaching. We appeal to the word of God as sole authority in matters of faith, and it is indispensable that the people should be able to read it for themselves, that thereby they may "prove all things, and hold fast that which is good."

The conviction is deepening in the minds of those that take an active interest in the evangelisation of Spain, that simultaneously with proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ to the grown-up people, we must also seek to train up the rising generation in the knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures, which make wise unto salvation. Besides, it is a debt we owe to those who, at the risk of persecution and material losses, revive the message of glad tidings, to provide for their offspring sound religious instruction. There is no lack of gratuitous schools in this city, both Government and Popish; and whereas formerly the priests used to turn out into the streets the children of

those who frequented our church, now they are lavish with gifts and promises in order to dissuade the very same people from sending their children to our schools, and to induce them to send them to their own. But the people prefer our schools to any others, and no wonder, for those under the direction or influence of priests and nuns teach little beyond repeating a few prayers to Mary, the saints, and to the cross.

The following statistics will prove our success, and, I trust, enlist earnest prayer on behalf of the children and their teachers. They are compiled from the returns which the teachers present weekly and monthly; and as any pupil that is absent three consecutive days without justifying cause is struck out of the registry, none are borne on the books but those who are actually in regular attendance. As, however, the majority belong to the poorer classes, some are generally absent, either through illness, want of shoes, or while their clothes are being washed and mended, and this last cause reduces the attendance considerably on Saturdays. Nevertheless, the average attendance at our schools is far higher than at any others in this city, including the Government or Municipal schools. As I have ascertained by inquiry and inspection, very rarely are more than half the number of pupils present, and generally not much more than one-third.

The Sabbath Schools open at ten and close at twelve, and then the children are conducted by the teachers and monitors downstairs to the church, to attend morning worship, which they enliven with their youthful voices singing praises to God and the Lamb.

The Girls' School was opened on September 20, 1870, with two pupils, and for nearly a fortnight these two constituted the whole school! At the end of November there were only about twenty; but on its translation to the spacious halls above our present church in the centre of the town, the number increased rapidly, and at the end of May there were ninety-three.

The Boys' School was commenced on March 24, 1871, with one pupil, and for three days he was its solitary occupant. At the end of March there were nine, and by May 31 ninety-seven had been admitted, of whom six left, and there remained ninety-one.

A serious falling-off occurred last autumn. Not less than 56 boys quitted the school in August, and 39 girls in October! What was the cause of this extraordinary exodus? Was it that something went wrong in the schools? No; it was due solely to the antagonism of the priests and their partisans: it was the result of the operations of a "Catholic association" formed here, as elsewhere, for the express purpose of counteracting the spread of Evangelical Christianity, and more specially against the schools. A branch of the association undertook this latter task. In the course of six months they spent in eatables £53 11s. 3d., and in clothes, &c., £24 12s. 9d.—total, £78 4s.—among 65 families, whom its members had visited, and composed of over 350 persons, of whom about 250 were children, "over whose education they watch." I am quoting from their printed report. The association appeals to its evangelists to forward the great object for which it was formed, by personal co-operation as well as by money, and says: "Looking at the special circumstances that surround us, it must be considered as *a preferable duty*, or as *a means of self-preservation*." The underlining is copied

from the appeal. This is all fair, if they would only abstain from persecution, intimidation, and the use of other carnal weapons characteristic of popery. Their local "Neo-Carlist" newspaper persistently accuses us of bribing parents, and of enticing children to our schools without parental consent—charges which, I need scarcely add, are destitute of all foundation. No child is admitted unless presented by its parents or guardians, or without a ticket of admission from me. And what has been the final result of the onslaught and lavish expenditure? Allowing for ordinary fluctuations, some 40 boys and 25 girls were withdrawn from the schools through the exertions of the association at a cost of £78! Many of them have returned, and others have come to cover the loss. The attendance goes on increasing, and in this month of January there is a clear gain of 49 pupils, and we have now 316 children in the schools. I believe we could have hundreds more, and I greatly desire to open more schools in other populous quarters of this city. They are the nurseries of the church. These children will be the future members, teachers, perhaps preachers and office-bearers, of the Evangelical Church of Spain.

Then, again, we hope shortly to begin regular public preaching at San Fernando, though the response to my appeal has not yet produced sufficient to cover the first year's rentage, &c. The 354 adults who have petitioned for the opening of a church in their city have about 300 children among them, and they fully expect that we shall likewise provide a sound religious education for their offspring. Are we to say to them, "No; we will preach the gospel to you grown-up people, but as to your children, they must continue under the baneful influences of priests and nuns, learning to cross themselves and to worship images"? Far be this from us. I doubt not in due time God will send the means for the opening of schools also. At present the great difficulty is to find suitable premises for public preaching.

The second public examination of the schools took place last Christmas-day, when 112 boys and 87 girls were present. It lasted about three hours. The pupils gave most satisfactory evidences of good and rapid progress, to the great delight of some 200 of their parents who witnessed it. It was highly gratifying to see the youngest children of both sexes replying correctly to questions on the catechism, grammar, &c., &c.; some, scarcely able to articulate the words, repeating texts and singing hymns. Through the kind liberality of some members of the lamented Rev. Dr. Robson's church at Glasgow, who sent us a box of clothes and materials, valued at £18, and the assistance of other kind friends, we are enabled to give upwards of 100 prizes, as well as a treat after the examination.

I frequently wish that some generous heart would send us a good magic-lantern, with dissolving-view apparatus and a variety of slides, for the entertainment and instruction of those dear lambs of the flock, both here and at Jerez. It might also serve to illustrate popular lectures for working men, of whom so very few can read or write.

The day of grace and mercy to Spain is come. Would that Christian men would see to it that the gospel be preached through the length and breadth of the land!—*Evangelical Christendom.*

WHAT THE PRESS THOUGHT OF OUR PRIZE SCHOLARS.

Most of the London journals noticed our Prize Scholars' Meeting on March 13th ult., and expressed their satisfaction with the visible results of Ragged Schools then produced. From two of the most influential we make the following extracts, as showing how independent onlookers regarded the fruits of our labours in the dens and hovels of London:—

The *Record* says—"One of the most cheering and encouraging sights in London, to the eye of a true philanthropist, is the annual prize gathering in Exeter Hall of former scholars of Ragged Schools, who are now filling situations of trust, with credit to themselves and to the satisfaction of their employers. The meeting for 1872 was held on Wednesday evening, under the presidency of the Earl of Shaftesbury, and was even more successful in point of numbers and enthusiasm than the preceding ones have been. The greater part of the body of the hall was filled with well-clothed, well-fed, and well-behaved young people of both sexes, to the number of 750, grouped around their respective banners, with bright and happy faces, which spoke the pleasure they experienced in being present at such a gathering. The rest of the large hall was densely packed by the public long before the hour announced for the commencement of the meeting. On looking down upon the children from the platform, the thought involuntarily rose to one's mind that, but for the kindly interest taken in them by the promoters of the Ragged School system, many of them would, at the present moment, be confined in our gaols or reformatories, while others would probably be leading idle or criminal lives, which would, sooner or later, bring them within the power of the law. It is not given to every society to be able to show such tangible results of its labours, and the Committee of the Ragged School Union may be congratulated on the remarkable success of the movement, even in the lifetime of its noble founder."

In a kindred spirit the *Mirror* thus records its impression of this unique gathering:—"Exeter Hall on Wednesday evening was the scene of one of those grandly impressive and touching sights which, as Lord Shaftesbury truly says, can nowhere be witnessed save in England. For it was the occasion of the ingathering by the Ragged School Union of servants of good character who were formerly scholars in the Ragged Schools to receive at the hands of the noble earl whose name is so intimately identified with one of the most glorious triumphs of philanthropy—the rescue and the regeneration, both socially and morally, of the neglected and forsaken children of our streets—the prizes which the council annually award to the well-conducted for years after they have passed out of the immediate care of their former teachers. We do not envy the feelings of that man or woman who could look on these children—some 750 in number—and contrast their cheerful looks, their neat and cleanly appearance, and their orderly conduct, with their former hapless, hopeless state, without experiencing a sense of thankfulness that under God's Providence such a transformation has been wrought, through that blessed agency known as 'The Ragged School Movement.'

See them as they sit there, closely packed and occupying the greater portion of that capacious hall, ranged under their respective banners—

'Their various pennons floating in the air'—

and remember that all of those children are honourably, if humbly, fulfilling their duties in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call them, and are but types of many thousands who have assembled for the same purpose for the last nineteen years, and who, had it not been for the Ragged School, must have gone to swell the ranks of crime, and would have converted this peaceful and orderly metropolis into a very Pandemonium. Then, indeed, can you, even as an outsider, form some conception of the magnitude of the undertaking which the Committee of the Ragged School Union so well and so wisely control, and then can you appreciate the vast amount of good conferred on the country by an effort which, commenced under almost overwhelming difficulties, has gradually taken a hold on the affections of the people of this country, until it has assumed its present proportions, and has been crowned with a most wonderful success."

THE FUTURE OF RAGGED SCHOOLS.

CONFERENCE OF RAGGED SCHOOL MANAGERS.

A CONFERENCE of Managers of Ragged Schools was held on March 27th, at Field Lane Ragged School. The meeting was specially convened by the Committee of the Ragged School Union, to consider a resolution of the Committee of the Ragged School Union passed on February 23. The resolution was as follows:—"That a letter be addressed to the schools in union with the Ragged School Union, inviting them, in any case where there is a proposal on the part of the Committee to transfer their school to the School Board, to put themselves in communication with this Committee, with the view to united action, and for the purpose of making the most suitable arrangements with the School Board. *But the Committee*—while desirous of assisting schools to make such arrangements—*would deprecate any hasty or ill-considered transfer of the schools to the Board.*"

Mr. H. C. PIERSON, who presided, stated that some managers had written letters which showed that the object of the Committee of the Ragged School Union was misunderstood. They had no desire to exercise any pressure on local schools, nor to advise them to transfer their schools to the School Board. All they intended, without giving any opinion as to the advisability of such transfer, was to help those who wished to join the School Board, by concerted action to get the best terms. The Committee of the Union had convened this meeting simply to give the managers of Ragged Schools an opportunity of stating their opinions on the subject. Mr. Wyon, who was to have opened the subject, was unhappily away ill, as was also the Secretary, Mr. Gent, from the same cause. Mr. Buckingham would, however, open the discussion.

Mr. BUCKINGHAM said that the Committee had no desire for the affiliated schools to join the School Board; but were determined to stand by the schools,

and help them more than ever. It would be frightful, after thirty years' work, if we were to strike our flag. Our objects are religious and social. We not only teach in the Ragged School, but go to the homes of our scholars, and reach the parents. We have still a large field of labour before us. Keep open your schools, then, and doubt not that the public will liberally help. Our past successes are a guarantee for success in the future. Our object is religious, and we must keep the Bible in our schools. Another subject cannot be omitted. Are our paid teachers, after twenty years' service, to be scattered, because they are not certificated? If not certified by her Majesty's Inspectors, they are certificated in *heart*. They must not, then, be cast away as worthless. Then, again, if you are in debt, come to the Union, which has a large reserved fund, and we are prepared to help you as much as possible.

Mr. SNAPE: We must examine our position. The School Board requires both efficient teachers and buildings. The question is this, Cannot the Union help in both points? The Committee have no wish for schools to go over, but only to help those who wish to be transferred. This is shown by the last clause in the resolution which I proposed—namely, that "the committee would deprecate any hasty or ill-considered transfer." The Committee were only afraid that schools intending to go over might make bad terms. There is still a large work for us; but we must dive down a little deeper, and get into our schools more of what are styled "gutter children."

Mr. HYTCHE stated that out of seventy-three institutions in the West and South, only twelve had offered their buildings to the School Board. Five of these had been accepted, negotiations were pending in four other cases, two had been refused by the Board, and one had declined to accept the terms offered by the Board. He also said that forty-eight schools had reported their financial state. Of these, twenty-eight had an aggregate debt of £518 6s. 1d., twenty had a balance in hand of £402 19s. 1d., leaving a gross debt of £115 7s.

Mr. CURTIS stated that there are ninety-six institutions in the East and North. Of these, nine had joined the School Board, and seven more were negotiating the transfer. Of these schools, while some report an aggregate debt of £988, the remainder had reported a balance of £1,010, so that the schools had been in a satisfactory financial condition.

Mr. J. MACGREGOR (London School Board): Nearly all of the 300 School Boards permit Bible reading at fixed times. In London, explanations are allowed to be given for half an hour daily. What is needed are Christian teachers. The School Board charges a fee of one penny, and nearly all the scholars pay it. We do not ask you to come over to us. But we do say, Make them efficient, and keep them. But if you cannot do so, then make the best terms with the School Board you can. In that case each school will be permitted to appoint four out of the eight managers. We are not rivals, but fellow-workers. As regards teachers, it is the Government, not we, who require certificates. And it is her Majesty's Inspectors who decide whether schools are efficient, and not the School Board.

Mr. FRIEDBERG (Wentworth Street): The conscience clause is a fallacy. It thus operates at Berlin, where I was educated. Out of several hundreds in the school I attended, only twelve attended when the Bible was read. Sunday Schools are not sufficient to teach religion. We want it taught every day. Now Ragged Schools do what the School Board cannot do—they teach religion from the heart. For they remember that all their scholars are probationers for heaven.

Mr. SOLTAU (Lamb and Flag): Our Day School was reported as "inefficient." We consulted whether we should engage more teachers, but could not afford the expense. On the other hand, to reduce our numbers would have been cruel. We

have decided to keep open our Day School, with its 360 scholars, as long as possible. Through the aid of the School Board visitors, we hope to reach those irregular scholars who were the principal cause of our schools being reported as inefficient.

Mr. HOUSDON (Morton Road): If we cannot make our Day Schools as efficient as those of the School Board, we ought to give them up. That Board can alone, through its visitors, reach gutter children.

Mr. HOLLAND (George Yard): We may be satisfied with the present School Board; but what will it be when Christian men are removed? The Bible has been excluded from schools in America, where state education is carried on. This has led in New York to the institution of Mission Schools, like our Ragged Schools. For this reason we do not mean to join the School Board; in fact, if we do, many subscribers threaten to withdraw their subscriptions. Let us act as feeders to the School Board, and take in the dirty, uncombed, half-starved children.

Mr. TABRUM (Limehouse): We have handed our school over to the School Board for twelve months. We have the use of the school-room on Sunday and week nights. If we do not like the practical working during the twelve months' experiment, we shall withdraw from the Board.

Mr. WATSON (Hoxton): We have handed over our school to the Board. But whilst the trust-deed says that the school shall be free, the School Board charges one penny. Is this legal?—Mr. MACGREGOR replied: If the Privy Council sanction it, the trusts, according to Act of Parliament, can be set aside; but of course with the consent of the trustees.

Mr. WILLIAMS (St. Giles's): A large number of our Day Schools are, or can be made, efficient. What is required is this; for the School Board to exert its pressure on the parents of irregular scholars; and then we can bring up the children to the examination standard.

In reply to a question, Mr. MACGREGOR said that compulsory education will be introduced gradually by the School Board. There are vacancies for 54,000 children in efficient schools in London. These will be first filled up.

The Conference then concluded with the Doxology.

STATISTICS OF EDUCATION IN LONDON.

FROM the Report just presented to the London School Board respecting the number of children between five and thirteen who are in or out of school, we glean the following particulars:—

The Report said it appeared from the last Census that on the 2nd of April, 1871, the population of London was 3,265,005; that the number of children between the ages of three and thirteen was 681,101, of whom 97,307 were being educated at home or in schools where the weekly fee exceeded ninepence, and 9,101 were inmates of institutions; and that the number of children remaining and belonging to the class which require elementary schools was 574,693, of whom 398,679 were attending, and 176,014, for various causes, were not attending school.

With reference to age, the whole number of children requiring elementary schools were found to be divisible as follows:—Those between three and five were 139,095; those between five and thirteen were 435,598. The corre-

sponding numbers for those attending were 70,440 and 328,239; and for those not attending, 68,655 and 107,359 respectively.

The children who required or would require elementary schools, but who did not attend, might be classified as follows:—Ill, 14,829; disabled, 2,673; too young, 55,760; working at home, 9,816; working abroad—half-timers, 1,332; whole-timers, 27,045—28,377; absent from neglect or other causes, 64,559;—total, 176,014.

"The Board have now to decide (continued the Report) how far the above excuses may be considered valid. The pleas of illness, as already defined, and physical disability must be admitted at once. It is probable that with reference to the whole population of children the numbers above given will bear a tolerably constant ratio. The plea urged by a parent that a child under five years of age is too young to attend school must also be admitted, inasmuch as the Board has no power to compel him to send his child to school. With reference to children at work, the Board are of opinion that for practical purposes they may admit the plea in half the total number of cases. In the case of half-timers, who attend school only ten hours in the week, a little less than half the nominal amount of school accommodation would be necessary. In the case of children above the age of ten, many will, no doubt, claim whole or partial exemption under the fourth bye-law, but, on the other hand, many will not be able to claim exemption at all. Having no positive means of estimating the ratio of these two classes of children, the Board suppose them to be equal. And as a general rule the Board have assumed that the whole number of children at work will correspond to half that number for whom school provision should be made On the whole, it would appear that of the total number of children classed as not attending school, 95,975 may be considered to have valid excuses for non-attendance, and 80,039 to have no reasonable excuse at all. The number of children attending elementary schools was given above as 398,679. If to these we add the children who should undoubtedly be at school, we have as the gross total of children for whom elementary schools should be provided the number of 478,718."

On the subject of "Available Accommodation," the Report said:—"At the present moment it appears that in the metropolis there are 1,149 efficient schools, accommodating 312,925 scholars, and 250 schools, efficient in buildings or instruction alone, accommodating 37,995 scholars, *i.e.*, on the whole, 1,399 schools completely or partially efficient, with a total accommodation of 350,920 scholars." Under the head "Accommodation to be provided," the Committee arrived at the conclusion that the schools for 478,718 children should have accommodation for 454,783 children in average attendance: adding that, as the number of available school places had been shown to be 350,000, it followed that schools had still to be provided with accommodation for 103,863 children in average attendance.

"Taking the whole area of the metropolis," the Committee said, "they would ask the Department to authorise the immediate provision of schools for 100,600 children. In five of the ten divisions, *i.e.*, in the City, Chelsea, Greenwich, Marylebone, and Westminster, owing to exceptional causes, they would recommend the provision of accommodation in excess of the deficiency

to the extent of 9,790 school places. But in the remaining five divisions, *i.e.*, in Finsbury, Hackney, Lambeth, Southwark, and the Tower Hamlets, where the deficiency on the whole is 94,121, they would only recommend the immediate provision of school accommodation for 79,650 children."

SOUGHT AND FOUND.

THE late Rev. William Bruce gives the following striking narrative of God's blessing upon the faithful labours of Ragged School teachers working amongst the most ignorant and depraved classes of Bristol:—

"Some years ago a poor stupid-looking girl came to us, and asked admission into our school. We took her, and she was borne with and taught for two or three winters. Then she left us, not much improved, as we thought. But she kept herself from her wicked neighbours and companions, and stood alone, for her bad father and mother were both confirmed drunkards. But she resisted temptation, and so careful was her walk that the neighbours began to respect her all around. Gradually the light seemed to break in more and more. She became very ill, dropsy set in, and death seemed near. She was now twenty-one years of age. She sent for me one day, and told me she wished to profess the name of Christ; and asked me to baptize her. I said, 'I cannot do so unless I know your state of mind and heart before God.' She entreated me not to delay, for she was likely to die. I asked her, 'And what then, Fanny?'

'Then I shall be with Jesus.'

'What makes you think so?'

'Because he says, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out"—and I believe him.'

'But what makes you come to him?'

'I am a guilty sinner, and I do not know who to go to but he.'

'Well, what do you go to him for?'

'To forgive me *all* my sins.'

'And are you truly sorry that you have sinned?'

'I am, and he knows it.'

From that time she seemed to grow in grace—so peaceful, so happy—in the midst of much pain. On the morning of her death I saw her. She had no fear, but a clear hope founded wholly on Christ. She seemed more and more astonished at his love to her. I read the first few verses of the 14th of St. John: she seemed to drink in every word, and said so sweetly, *Amen*.

She died in the afternoon: and her poor mother said, 'All her trouble was about *us*.' She sent for her father and mother, and brothers and sisters, and charged them every one 'to seek Jesus.' The poor inhabitants around wept at her death, so much had they come to love her.

We have all said, 'It is worth keeping Night Schools for *one* such instance of God's mercy reaching a poor lost one.'"

WORKING MEMBERS OF CHURCHES.

How few there are who take part in the active duties of religion. Some of our churches, and in comparison with the whole number of professing members, the majority, are not active workers. They seem to feel, but they do not act. We trust that the light is within them, but they do not let it *shine out*. They profess to feel interested in the welfare of religion and their own churches, and wish them success; but they make no actions, nor do any deeds by which it may be visible to all that they have a heart to work and *do work*. There seems to be a disposition in the minds of many to be simple recipients of the blessings of the Gospel without dispensing or being the means of dispensing these blessings to others.

Christ said to the man out of whom he had cast the evil spirit, and who afterwards sat at his feet clothed in his right mind, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." So every Christian, every member of the Church, should feel that he is sent forth to say and to do something for Christ.

To come to church, listen to the truth, pay our pew rent, give to benevolent objects, and honour and respect religion,—all this is well, but is it *all?* Does it give the evidence of an earnest Christian worker? It is a kind of *silent* Christian life—a sort of *latent* zeal, which accomplishes nothing. Ah, no!

If we want to be earnest workers for Christ and in our Church we must go into the Prayer Meeting, into the Sunday or Ragged School, engage in the tract cause, interest ourselves in our various missions, ascertain their wants, read the accounts and letters of missionaries, give ourselves and get others to give; speak out for Christ by prayer in our families, in public; talk to our friends and neighbours, and constrain them to come to Jesus; in a word, we must *say* and *do* something for Christ and his cause.

Oh, if it were possible so to arouse the professing members of our Church that they would become workers—all doing something for Christ's cause and the Church of their adoption—we should soon see a different state of things throughout the bounds of our beloved Zion!

May the Lord hasten the time when every believer will say, "I can do something for Jesus," and hear His voice to them saying, "Work, for I am with thee, saith the Lord"! Even the hidden service of love finds favour in the eyes of the Lord, who can make work bring forth fruit to yield an hundredfold.

"Then sow in the furrows of time alway,
Till, in yonder palace of light,
Ye cast at your Master's feet the sheaves
That were reaped in the world's dark night."

E.

Poet's Corner.

WHICH WAS RICHEST?

Ben Adam had a golden coin one day,
Which he put out at interest with a Jew;
Year after year, awaiting him, it lay,
Until the doubled coin two pieces grew,
And these two, four—so on, till people said,
"How rich Ben Adam is!" and bowed the servile head.

Ben Selim had a golden coin that day,
Which to a stranger, asking alms, he gave,
Who went, rejoicing, on his unknown way.
Ben Selim died, too poor to own a grave.
But, when his soul reached heaven, angels with pride
Showed him the wealth to which his coin had multiplied.

IF WE ONLY KNEW.

If we knew the cares and crosses
Crowding round our neighbour's way,
If we knew the little losses
Sorely grievous, day by day,
Would we then so often chide him
For his lack of thrift and gain,
Leaving on his heart a shadow—
Leaving on our life a stain?

If we knew the silent story,
Quivering through the heart of pain,
Would our manhood dare to doom them
Back to haunts of guilt again?
Life hath many a tangled crossing,
Joy hath many a break of woe,
And the cheeks' tear, stained and whitest,
This the blessed angels know.

Let us reach into our bosoms,
For the key to other lives,
And with love toward erring nature,
Cherish good that still survives;
So that, when our disrobed spirits
Soar to realms of light again,
We may say, "Dear Father, judge us,
As we judge our fellow-men."

Teachers' Column.

WHAT ARE SUNDAY SCHOOLS FOR?

We know of no good reason for sending a child to Sunday School, or of seeking to bring a child into a Sunday School, except to make a Christian of him. We are in the habit of speaking of Sunday Schools as "nurseries of the church;" and no phrase could be happier in defining that which is undeniably the first object of a Sunday School—namely, Christian nurture.

There is a class of Sunday Schools, in large cities mainly, that need instruction in the facts of Christianity, but it is true that the great mass of children in Sunday Schools know the story familiarly, and need nothing so much as to be religiously impressed and brought consciously and by a sweet and solemn choice into direct relation with the great Object of worship, and into a voluntary and loving allegiance to him. The observations of a life of observation have taught us that the principal good results of Sunday Schools come not from enterprising and gifted superintendents, come not from interesting and funny story-tellers, who are known technically as "Sunday School men," come not from singing sacred words to "Yankee Doodle," or of frivolous words to still more frivolous tunes, come not from huge feats or memory in the rehearsal of long chapters of Holy Writ, come from none of the numberless tricks resorted to for enthralling juvenile interest and exciting juvenile ambition and love of praise—but from the personal influence of Christian teachers, who, knowing their scholars intimately and loving them tenderly, lead them by the power of their love and the light of their own Christian character into the adoption of a Christian life.

With such views as these, readers will conclude that we have not a very favourable opinion of much of the machinery used in Sunday Schools. The children are not to blame for demanding excitement and amusement, because these have been the means resorted to for bringing many into Sunday School and keeping them there. Indeed, the impression is quite prevalent among the children of some schools that they are conferring a great favour on superintendent and teachers by their attendance. If they cannot get prizes, hear funny stories, or have treats, or Christmas presents, or some visible reward, they threaten to leave the schools,—either to stay out entirely, or go to some other school where they can obtain what they demand. So all sorts of means are resorted to to keep up excitement, and in the meantime, they get no religious impression whatever. The tunes they sing amuse them, but nurse no spirit of devotion. The books they read and the stories they hear interest them, but leave no result except hunger for more excitement of the same kind. The prizes they win inspire their pride in a sort of excellence which spares little room for Christian humility. In one way and another, the opportunities of making a deep and good impression of character and life are frittered away, and the children are no better prepared to enter upon life and the resistance of its multiplied temptations to evil than if they had never seen a Sunday School.

In our judgment there is a vast amount of machinery instituted by professional Sunday School men that is the veriest "bosh." They have complicated that which is unspeakably simple. They have undertaken to do that by artificial processes and by ingenious contrivances which can only be done well through the instincts of a loving heart and a heaven-enkindled zeal. The touch of a gentle hand in the exhibition of a personal affec-

tion and interest is worth ten thousand times more than the most elaborate exposition of Bible truth on a black-board. If superintendents and teachers possess common sense, and know exactly what they wish to do, and wish first and most to make Christians of their children, let them follow their own methods and leave the professional methods to those who need them.—*Dr. Holland.*

WORDS FOR THE DISCOURAGED.

Cheer up, remember Him who has said, "My grace is sufficient for thee," and "My strength is made perfect in thy weakness" (2 Cor. xii. 9), and if ever Satan should come in upon you as a flood, with his doubts, and suggestions, and temptations, resist him manfully, and go at once to your strong refuge, for strength and support. Never yield to his temptation, but in the strength of the Lord "go forward" in the course you have begun, for it is to those who "endure to the end" and are faithful even unto death who shall receive that "crown of life."

Are you a Ragged School teacher and discouraged because you discover no fruit? It may be that you have sown the good seed for many years, and watered it with tears, but as yet you can see no increase. Perhaps you are deeply concerned for the welfare of the class committed to your charge. Time after time you have met there and told them the story of Jesus' dying love, and entreated them to come to Jesus just now. But they seem to be still indifferent—still as careless and unconcerned as ever, and you are ready to adopt the language of the prophet as your own: "Who hath believed our report? and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"

"Hope, teacher, hope, the promise take:
Faint not and thou shalt reap
In season due. Bear trials well,
Let each day's work thy patience tell.
Hope, teacher, hope."

"Cheer up"—take fresh courage, persevere in your "work of faith, and labour of love," resting on the never-failing promise of Him who hath said, "He that goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall *doubtless* return again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psalm cxxvi. 6).

Whoever you are, when engaged in a good work, and meeting with discouragements are tempted to withdraw from it, think of our motto, "Cheer up," and let it stimulate you to yet greater diligence in the work you have undertaken, remembering the promise, "Work, for I am with thee, saith the Lord." E.

Children's Gallery.

MISSIONARY GARDENS.

Harry Vaughan, when only eight years old, wished to have a bit of ground given to him on which he could raise something for missions, so he had a little plot given to him full of currant-trees. When they were ripe he picked them and sold them all for five shillings. Oh, how rich and happy he felt! he would not spend a penny of it for himself, but desired to have his money sent off, so it might begin at once and do some good. So his father wrote a letter, and sent it off for Home Missions.

It was an excellent beginning for a child, to dedicate his first earnings to the Lord.

Now, what other country children will begin with a little garden for the Lord? If all would aid in such a work a large revenue might be gained for our Ragged Schools.

A lady attended a Bible Meeting and

was so deeply interested that she wished to give a guinea towards it. But she had no guinea, except one she had laid aside to purchase a hive of bees. She resolved to give that, however, and the next day a swarm of bees came and settled down on a tree in her garden. She was so surprised and impressed with the incident, that she resolved to dedicate them to the Bible cause, and also the successive swarms from them. In a few years' time the sum amounted to over ten pounds.

A gentleman who heard this incident related, went home and dedicated a walnut-tree, loaded with walnuts, to the same cause.

Now what have *you* got for the Lord, and what proportion are you willing to give for the good of the children of our Ragged Schools, whom Jesus loves?

ELLA.

"HOW MUCH DO I COST?"

A LITTLE daughter, ten years old, lay on her deathbed. It was hard parting with the pet flower of the household. The golden hair, the loving blue eyes, the bird-like voice,—the truthful, affectionate, large-hearted, pious child! How could she be given up? Between this child and her father there has always existed, not a relationship merely, but the love of congenial natures. He fell on his knees by his darling's bedside, and wept bitter tears. He strove to say but he could not, "Thy will be done!" It was a conflict between grace and nature, such as he had never before experienced. His sobs disturbed the child, who had been lying apparently unconscious. She opened her eyes, and looked distressed.

"Papa, dear papa," said she at length.

"What, my darling?" answered the father, striving for composure.

"Papa," she asked, in faint, broken tones, "how much—do I cost you—every year?"

"Hush, dear, be quiet?" he replied, in great agitation; for he feared delirium was coming on.

"But please—papa, how much do I cost you?"

To soothe her, he replied, though with a shaking voice:

"Well dearest, perhaps ten pounds. What then, darling?"

"Because, papa, I thought—may be—you would lay it out this year in Bibles for poor children to remember me by."

With what delicate instinct had the dying child touched the strings of comfort! A beam of heavenly joy glanced in the father's heart, the bliss of one noble loving spirit mingled with its like. Self was forgotten, the sorrow of parting, the lonely future. Naught remained but the mission of love, and a thrill of gratitude that in it he and his beloved were co-workers.

"I will, my precious child," he replied, kissing her brow with solemn tenderness.

"Yes," he added, after a pause, "I will do it every year as long as I live. And thus my Lilian shall yet speak, and draw hundreds and thousands after her to heaven."

The child's very soul beamed forth in a long, loving, smiling gaze into her father's eyes; and still gazing, she fell asleep. Waking in a few minutes, she spoke in a loud, clear voice, and with a look of ecstasy:

"Oh, papa, what a sweet sight! The golden gates were opened, and crowds of children came pouring out. Oh, such crowds! And they ran up to me, and began to kiss me and call me by a new name. I can't remember what it was, but it meant, 'Beloved for thy Father's sake.'"

She looked upward, her eyes dreamy, her voice died into a whisper, "Yes, yes, I come! I come!" and the lovely form lay there untenanted of the lovelier spirit.

John Lee rose from his knees with a holy triumph on his face. "Thank God," said he, "I am richer by another treasure in heaven!"

Editor's Note-book.

NOT TO-MORROW.

Mrs. Fletcher, of Madely, who was a very devoted handmaid of the Lord, said, to encourage others in the same blessed service, "*Do each hour just the good that opens before you.* Doing so, you will prove the Lord's faithfulness to that saying, '*He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*'"

Another has said, "Do the duty that is just at hand to be done, even if it be with self-denial; and you will find the Lord will open your path to further usefulness. '*To him that hath shall more be given.*' Let us bring ourselves into warm contact with those we wish to bless. Paul said he became all things to all men that he might save some.

Heaven does not give up its reprobates as easily as we do. Our Father in heaven is "longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish," and his long-suffering often proves salvation,—a reason for us to be prayerful, and patient "in well-doing." Let us "show *the kindness of God*" *to* them that know him not—that through our mercy they may obtain mercy."

Oh, how important it is that we should be prompt in what we do for the good of souls; also steadfast and persevering while life is ours; for when we come to the close of life we shall feel overpowered with a sense of our shortcomings in the Lord's service, and we shall mourn to think we have done so little for Him, and that little so imperfectly. This has been painfully felt by many Christians on the bed of death. What others have lamented when it was too late to make further efforts, should serve as a solemn caution to make us more diligent in improving the present moment for the good of souls.

The greatness of the object—to try "to save a soul from death"—calls for much prayer for the Holy Spirit to make our efforts useful; and if we are truly united to Christ, as the branch is to the vine, our fruitfulness will bring glory to the Lord.

SAVE THE JEWELS.

While in one of our large cities, passing down one of its great thoroughfares, I noticed a lady suddenly stop. She had dropped a diamond, and it rolled into the filth and dirt at the edge of the walk. She did not ask any one to try to find it for her, but stooping down herself, sought, with her parasol, to bring to light the lost treasure; but in vain. Quite a number of persons gathered around; and she, fearing to lose the prize if others united in the search, hastily drew off the light kid glove from her delicate hand, and, baring her arm, thrust it down into the filth, and brought up a handful of dirty, slimy mud; but the ring was not there. Again she dipped into the filth, and again; but with the same result.

The fair, white hand was now covered with the refuse of the street; but what did she care? She was not ashamed; a treasure was there, and if it could be found, she would find it. Again she tries, and this time sees gleaming in the handful of filth the sparkling gem. Is she not repaid?

* * * * * *

Something is lying upon the ground, at the side of the road—seemingly a mass of filthy and dirty rags—a man beastly drunk; but in the midst of it all there is a gem worth far more than gold or diamonds. For that man has a soul; an immortal, never-dying soul.

Who will stand the staring gaze and sneers of the lookers-on to save that treasure—to lift the man, seemingly below the level of the beast, to the high and glorious privilege of a child of God?

"He which converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

Correspondence.

LABOURER'S CLUBS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—I quite concur in that part of the article on Working Men's Clubs in your number for April (p. 83), which indicates that the lamentable failure of so many Working Men's Clubs is due to "the landlords' hold on them." One Labourers' Club has, however, succeeded in a most unlikely spot, viz., the "Devil's Acre" of Westminster. This Club, which is an offshoot of Perkins' Rents Ragged School, has now 300 members. This success is due to the founder being content to give friendly advice rather than to show visible patronage. Thus from the first the Club has been managed, and well managed, by the men themselves. This is provided for by the 2nd rule—namely—

"The Club shall be managed by a committee of working men, consisting of not more than thirteen nor fewer than six members, of the age of 23 and upwards, and who shall have been regular members of the Club at least six months. Six members, including the chairman and secretary, to form a quorum."

If these Working Men's Clubs are ever to be a success, it must be by treating the members as men, not as babies—in other words, by throwing aside, as a species of heresy, that perpetually doing for them what they can better do for themselves. In this way we shall practically endorse Lord Shaftesbury's suggestion, "What the poor want is sympathy, not patronage."

I am, &c.,

A. B. C.

Facts and Scraps.

PREACHING TO THE POOR.—On the 22nd of March last, the Earl of Shaftesbury entertained at his residence above fifty of the leading evangelists of the outcasts of London. The object of the meeting was that they might impart to his lordship and to each other what they are doing as preachers to the poor—the results of their labours, and to learn what agency is still needed to reach the lapsed classes. The Ragged School Union was represented by Messrs. Hytche and Curtis; Mr. Blake, the Ragged Church Union; Mr. Sawell, the Theatre Services, and Mr. Kirkham, the Open Air Mission. The work among adults in Ragged Schools in Osborne Place, Field Lane, George Yard, Lamb and Flag Court, and St. Giles's, was sketched by preachers to the poor—some of twenty years' standing.

COST OF THE POLICE.—The proportion of the police to the population in England is 11·5 to every 10,000 persons, whilst in Ireland it is more than double, being 25·5 to the same number. The cost

of police in England and Wales is estimated at £2,116,884, nearly four-fifths of which are defrayed out of local taxes, £448,000 only being borne by imperial taxation. The police forces in Ireland cost £963,896, and more than nine-tenths of this sum are paid by the general taxation of the United Kingdom.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY.—An interesting meeting was lately held for the purpose of reviewing the work carried on in the London workhouses under the care of the Christian Community. Major-General Burrows, who presided, expressed his great desire to see such a society set to work in every large town in the kingdom. The plan of operations in which every worker had his work apportioned was what was really wanted. Fourteen workers then gave their experience of the work, and related many remarkable incidents, including many happy and triumphant deaths, and numerous conversions. It appears that, in the houses visited by the members, there are no less than five thousand paupers, nearly all of whom are by this means brought under the influence of religious teaching; and the general testimony was, that their visits are hailed with the greatest pleasure. What is most needed by this class is sympathy. The cold or haughty demeanour of workhouse officials towards the poor is well known, while every human susceptibility is as active in them as in other people. When the Christian worker pays his weekly visit, recognising in them the relation of a brother or sister in Christ, he gives them the right hand of fellowship, and enters into their sorrows with a brother's feeling.

CITY LOANS TO YOUNG TRADESMEN.—Under the trusteeship of the Lord Mayor, the two senior Aldermen, the Recorder, and the Chamberlain of the City, a large sum of money, left by Mr. Samuel Wilson, is advanced to deserving young tradesmen, residing within five miles of the Guildhall, if they can show they are solvent, and not engaged in what may well be called the "liquor traffic." They must have been in business one year and not more than three. Personal security has to be given, and the advances are in sums of £100 to £300. The boon, for such it is, must save many from falling into the clutches of the sharks who fatten on the hard toil of honest men.

Notices of Meetings.

POPLAR.

A MEETING was held on the 19th ult. in the new Town Hall, Newby Place, Poplar, in the interest of the above schools.

Mr. John Gretton, the superintendent, then read the report, which said:

It is sixteen years since these schools were commenced by a few friends, who were anxious to rescue the outcast children of the neighbourhood from the paths of ignorance and crime, and lead them into the path of virtue. The children first met in the schools adjoining Trinity Chapel, where they received religious instruction every Sunday evening. In the latter part of 1864 the school was removed to the large rooms known as the Poplar Ragged Schools, East India Road. Large as these rooms are, the accommodation is insufficient; there are no class rooms for the large number of young men and women who attend during the winter, and who need separate rooms in which to be taught. In the winter months the number of scholars averaged 250; in the summer, 160. There are 29 teachers on the books, but the average attendance is only 19, and sometimes the number does not exceed

12; at least twenty more teachers are needed, and the hope was expressed that the appeal made that night for more teachers would not be in vain. A Parents' Tea Meeting was held on April 11, at which about 200 sat down. At the commencement of the past year we received an intimation that two of our oldest friends in the work (Mr. and Mrs. Parker) were likely to be removed from us to a distance; and in September this event took place. They laboured constantly with us for upwards of fifteen years as teachers. A presentation was made to Mr. and Mrs. Parker on their leaving. One of the senior scholars had been received as a teacher during the past year.

CHAPEL STREET, STRATFORD.

THE annual meeting of the Chapel Street Ragged Schools was held at the Workmen's Hall, West Ham Lane, on Thursday evening, when the chair was taken by Colonel White, J.P.

Dr. Nicholson, the secretary, spoke the report. He said—The great difficulty we have always had to contend with in Ragged Schools, has been the casual irregular attendance of the children. The master has had no real check upon the boys, or power to compel them to come. The parents in many instances rather encouraged them to be absent; they were wanted to mind the house, the baby, or run errands, or something in the opposite direction to school. We have tried what rewards for punctual attendance would effect, but even this mode of bribery has proved unsuccessful. They come into school and go out when they please, often for fun, sometimes to seek a shelter from the rain and cold; sometimes to get a cheap dinner on a Wednesday, or to join the treat, when some kind friend like Mr. Morewood has given the children a good tea, but seldom under the better influence of parents anxious to promote their mental improvement and moral training. Their clothes are so filthy and ragged that in many cases they have been burnt and others substituted by the Ladies' Committee, who with admirable skill and patience assist the mistress and the older girls to remodel cast-off clothes, that had been sent to the school, into comfortable articles of dress. The late Mr. W. H. Dean bequeathed to our schools an eighth part of his residuary property. At present the exact amount is unknown, but we know that it is charged with annuities amounting to £2,400, and that as the annuitants die the principal will be divided among the claimants; and if our schools are in existence, the trustees of our schools will receive an eighth share. The committee has held frequent deliberations on the subject, and after consultation with the School Board and the secretary of the Ragged Schol Union, have decided to continue the present management. We hold the freehold of the schools and cottage adjoining, and with the additional endowment by Mr. Dean, the trustees will be enabled to make them thoroughly efficient. Mrs. Lorring, the mistress, has gained the esteem of the Ladies' Committee, and her exertions in behalf of the girls are most praiseworthy. The needlework done, and the comfortable articles of apparel made out of small pieces of cloth and other material (which have been kindly presented by several drapery firms), are well worthy of inspection, and show how much can be gained by well-directed economy and thoughtful industry. The Shoe Club is still in operation, and is a great inducement to provident habits. The pence saved by the children are banked by the Ladies' Committee, and 2d. in the 1s. is contributed for the purchase of boots or shoes. Several girls have been placed in situations, and are working creditably as servants. During the cold weather we have once a week, through the liberality of the Destitute Children's Dinner Society, been able to give the children a good dinner of Irish stew at the charge of a halfpenny or penny; and, in some instances, without any payment.

Papers, Original and Selected.

OUR HARVEST-HOME.

From the outset Ragged Schools were more intended to socialise and to save than to initiate the children of the poor into "the three R's." Hence secular instruction may be regarded as an *after*-thought, rather than as an original feature in our programme. Secular instruction, in fact, was gradually introduced into Ragged Schools because it was found that it was in vain that broken-in scholars sought for work who could neither read nor write. If, then, School Boards should eventually supersede our Elementary Schools—though of that there is no immediate prospect—the great original principle which urged the pioneers of Ragged Schools into this field of labour would remain intact—namely, to fit the outcast or destitute classes for both worlds.

We are glad, then, to find from the Twenty-Eighth Report of the Ragged School Union, that the original work of Ragged Schools was not abandoned, but was rather strengthened last year. Thus fifty-eight new operations were added to Ragged Schools, all but fifteen of which had a direct bearing on the social or spiritual welfare of children or adults.

As might be expected from such patient and prayerful seed-sowing, a goodly harvest was reaped in 1871.

Take, for example, our Prize Servants. It was something for 87 Ragged Schools to report that 1,948 scholars obtained situations last year. Some of these when they entered the Ragged School were the raggedest of the ragged, or the most unruly of the unruly. Yet now they are doing readily and steadily a "good day's work for a fair day's wages," thanks to the kindly lessons of the Ragged School teachers. But it is still more pleasing to know that so successful were our young candidates for employment that 737 were publicly rewarded last March—463 for the first time. Remembering their homes, and their original habits, one cannot but feel that every prize scholar implies one less pauper, or one less "jail-bird."

Then, again, our busy shoe-blacks supply another precious

sheaf in the moral harvest of Ragged Schools. They numbered last year 362. These numbers, of course, are no proof of moral worth; but when we remember what many were—"loafers," if not worse—we think that their steady labour, environed as they are on all sides by powerful temptations, shows that they are illustrations of principle as well as of industry. And then remember what a large sum they realised,—for these lads dug out of that true gold-mine, the London mud, £11,003 8s. 11d. The shoe-black brigades came of age last year. Netting as they did, during the twenty-one years of their existence, no less than £111,081, they almost verify the old myth of our country-cousins that "London streets are paved with gold."

Nor can we ignore the social harvest heaped by our Penny and Farthing Banks. Such are the habits of improvidence and gluttony of the lower classes that it is something to induce them even to think of providing for a "rainy day." Now Parents' Meetings as well as Penny Banks all help to teach the duty of not spending to-day what is not needed now, but may possibly be wanted to-morrow. That many have been apt pupils is shown by the fact that in our 102 Penny Banks there were no less than 31,799 depositors, the large majority of these being adults. Their united deposits were £12,684. Out of this sum many paid their rent; others bought barrows and donkeys; and many more were clad in good raiment, rather than in second-hand finery.

So much for the social reapage of 1871, which might be materially extended did space admit. Yet probably some readers more anxious for the eternal than for the temporal, may exclaim, This is all very well in its place, but were there any spiritual results, or was the harvest only social? Happily, in this case also the ancient promise was amply fulfilled, "Those who sow in tears SHALL reap in joy." Some of these "first fruits" we would gratefully wave before the Lord, believing as we do that they are pledges of a bountiful harvest.

Statistics are, indeed, poor to tell the full tale of the spiritual success of Ragged Schools. The attendants at our schools are constantly changing. The migratory habit of the parents is one powerful element in such changes. Thus parents who are in the south to-day are found in some den or alley of the far east to-morrow. We cannot, then, possibly know, and never shall know before the day of final account, the full extent of our spiritual

reapage, and so now must be content to find a sheaf here and gleanings there.

First and foremost, we can point to 230 teachers, who were once scholars in the very Ragged Schools where they learnt the great truth—

> "For rest in Christ, is all the rest we know;
> Severed from Him all earthly bliss is woe!"

Some of these we have watched from boyhood to manhood, and have seen how the Spirit has gradually yet evidently wrought with the lessons of the teacher, until at length they closed with the offers of grace. Their next step was to do their utmost to point to Jesus the tens of thousands who still belonged to their original class. In every case, they display special aptitude in dealing with the sins and the sorrows of our social waifs and strays.

Then, again, out of the fifty-four Senior Bible Classes, 239 have come forward to testifiy their love to Jesus at the Supper of the Lord. The bulk of these, judging from their life and conversation, are not every-day Christians; but, ripe in experience, they are glowing with faith and joy. And no wonder, for what with ungodly relatives and jeering fellow-workmen, they have to undergo a fiery test, to which the bulk of Christians, in an age when religion is respectable, are rarely exposed.

The fact, too, that about 1,500 of our older scholars voluntarily attend the teachers' prayer meetings, or enquirers' classes, and that many meet on week-nights for prayer by themselves, speaks much for their spiritual yearnings. Some of these we have heard pray; and never was public prayer more marked by earnestness, or by that definiteness in request, which indicates the inner belief that direct prayer will surely bring a direct answer.

Facts like these show fully that the reaper has tracked the sower like his very shadow. Nor can we doubt that, whoever pens the Report for 1873, will have the same satisfactory results to record. Nay, we believe that we "shall see even greater things than these," if, combined with redoubled work, there is more earnest prayer. "What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." Then the reapage of this year will prove that He who tells us "In the morning [of youth] sow thy seed, and in the evening [of life] withhold not thy hand," ever intended, as the sequel of patient prayerful labour, that we should "joy before God according to the joy of harvest!"

OUTLINE OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION.

In presenting their Twenty-eighth Annual Report, your Committee cannot but express their gratitude to Almighty God for the success which He has vouchsafed to their humble labours during the past as during all former years.

Your Committee cannot present this Report without indicating their deep regret at the continued indisposition of their valued Secretary, Mr. Gent. But they hope that, in the providence of God, he may be speedily restored to health, and resume his wonted and valuable labours amongst them.

During a time of great perplexity, caused not so much by financial depression as by fears excited by the expected operation of the new Elementary Education Act, it might have been expected that our united labours for the improvement of the ragged and destitute classes would have relaxed. But, happily, if we have to report a decrease in the number of our scholars, yet most operations are in good working order; and thus Ragged Schools were as fruitful in results last year as during any period of their history.

It is true that Ragged Schools have been so long before the public, that the work is no longer invested with that romance which was evoked at the outset. But, though much has been done, very much more remains to be effected before the spiritual and social claims of the neglected classes will be fully reached. Parents still ignore, even if they are aware of, their responsibility to train their offspring for heaven. The race of the Fagins of Field Lane, who train the youth of both sexes as thieves, is not yet extinct. Penny gaffs and low concert rooms are still permitted to sow crime and vice broadcast. Thieves' literature forms the staple of the reading of thousands of children. Then, again, there are dismal "slums" in our very midst; and, abutting on the homes of opulence, are found hovels unfit even for the brute creation to inhabit. As results of these crying evils, sin and crime and sorrow may be traced everywhere; and the fit epitaph of countless thousands can only be—They lived, died, and were *lost!*

To meet these and similar social evils no plan has yet been devised to compare with the Ragged School system. In those schools both the destitute and the outcast meet with a brother's welcome and a brother's help. And, what includes the secret of their success, in whatever district Ragged Schools are planted they at once win the confidence of the classes for whose welfare they are established.

The question of the position and prospects of the Ragged School Union in consequence of the work of the London School Board has engaged the anxious attention of your Committee. It is certain that a large proportion of our schools must fail to be recognised as "efficient" elementary schools by the London School Board either as regards the state of the school buildings or the required standard of teaching. The Committee, however, see no reason why their efforts should in any way be relaxed. It is obvious that a

long time must elapse before the Education Act can come into full operation throughout the metropolis, and even then, in the opinion of the Committee, there will still remain a large floating juvenile population of the poorest and most neglected class below the influence of ordinary schools, but which, as past experience has shown, can be best reached by such missionary agency as Ragged Schools. To bring this class of children under direct Christian teaching was the original aim of the Ragged School movement, and it has yet to be seen whether the rate-aided schools now being established will to any great extent comprehend them. Meanwhile, it will be the earnest desire of your Committee, by every means in their power, though in no spirit of unfriendly rivalry, to carry on their work, being satisfied that the day is not yet come when Ragged Schools are no longer needed, and that as long as there are ragged children in the streets, and the public will sustain their efforts, it is their duty to labour on.

These questions led to a special meeting of your Committee, when, after long and earnest discussion, the following resolution was adopted, namely, "That a letter be addressed to the schools in union with the Ragged School Union, inviting them in any case in which there is a proposal on the part of the committee to transfer their school to the School Board, to put themselves in communication with this Committee, with the view to united action, and for the purpose of making the most suitable arrangements with the School Board; but this Committee, while desirous of assisting schools to make such arrangements, would deprecate any hasty or ill-considered transfer of the schools to the Board." It will be seen from the terms of this resolution that your Committee did not give any opinion respecting the advisability of transferring any Day School to the School Board, knowing that the local managers were the best judges as to the expediency of carrying on their schools apart from, or in connection with, the School Board. They therefore merely expressed their readiness to help those committees who thought of transferring their schools to make the best terms with the School Board, so that the general movement might not suffer from any hasty action.

Without further preface, your Committee proceed to refer to the various operations of the Society during the past year.

New schools and buildings have been opened in Butler's Place, Dockhead, and Osborne Place, Whitechapel. New schools have been erected in Kingsland and Gray's Yard. Additional rooms were provided in Salmon Lane, Rochester Mews, Mansfield Street, Bridge Street, and Burdett Road. As in some quarters there is a mistaken impression respecting our school buildings, it may be here intimated that out of 180 buildings 105 were built expressly for school purposes. Again, a moiety of the residue have been so improved as to fit them for all the requirements of Ragged Schools.

It is satisfactory to state that, notwithstanding the agitation connected with the future of Ragged Schools, the local friends much increased their machinery last year. Thus last year there were 58 additional operations; of which all but 15 were either of a social or a missionary character.

The numbers of schools and scholars are as follows, namely:—180 school buildings, in which are conducted 255 Sunday afternoon and evening schools, with an average attendance of 30,125; 176 Day Schools, with an

average attendance of 20,157; and 176 Night Schools, with an average attendance of 7,412.

The voluntary teachers, who are the very crown of the Ragged School system, still continue their self-denying labours "in season and out of season." It speaks much for the missionary spirit of the church of Christ that no less than 3,089 persons of all religious denominations, and of all ranks—from the noble to the cabman—are engaged in the great task of winning souls for Jesus. When it is stated that no less than 230 were once scholars in the very schools where they now teach, it shows how reproductive this work has been.

Teachers' Prayer Meetings are held by 104 Sunday Schools, and by a few on Saturday evenings. The average attendance is 2,616. At most, elder scholars are invited to attend; and they do so in large and increasing numbers.

Paid teachers form a large and important part of our agency. Last year they numbered 364. Of these 213 were employed in Day Schools; 128 taught Night Schools; and 23 conducted Industrial Classes.

Most display much aptitude for their work; and Her Majesty's Inspectors testified, in their written reports, after their examination last autumn, to the power they evidenced in disciplining a most unruly class. A few hold the Certificate of the Privy Council—others successfully sat for such certificates last Christmas; and a few have had a third-class certificate granted on the ground of ten years' service as paid teachers, and the efficiency of their schools. Some of these earnest men and women have been engaged in the work upwards of twenty-one years, and they throw an amount of energy and Christian love into their labour which cannot be too highly praised.

With the view of helping the paid teachers in their onerous duties, especially in the case of those Day Schools which are too poor to employ assistant teachers, paid Monitors have been found of essential service. 574 of these helpers are now employed in Day Schools. The interest of the teachers has not abated in Senior Bible Classes. There are now fifty-four such classes actively at work. They include 1,343 members. These classes serve to keep our elder scholars under religious influence at a most critical age—to deepen or awaken spiritual impressions; and they operate as a nursery, not only for the Christian church, but as a stepping-stone to the teacher's bench. Most, indeed, of the 239 communicants belonging to Ragged Schools have been or are members of these Bible Classes.

Children's Churches, or Juvenile Religious Services, are fast becoming a prominent feature in our Sunday labours. 43 have established such services, the united attendance being 3,414, or an average of 79. The Children's Church has many advantages over the ordinary Sunday morning school. As the service does not begin before eleven o'clock—or an hour and a half after the usual time of commencing Sunday School—elder scholars can more readily attend, and younger ones can more easily be got ready. Again, the Children's Church only requires the attendance of two teachers—one to officiate, and the other to keep order, alternately. Such a service, too, serves to initiate youth into the more regular forms of the sanctuary, and that by a service especially suited to their age and needs.

Clothing Clubs are now conducted by seventy-three schools. Last year the united contributions were £1,343. In many cases, too, they supply materials to the 4,001 girls employed in our eighty-six Needlework Classes; and thus serve to teach them those habits of neatness and industry which they are rarely taught at home.

Children's Dinners were given in the bulk of our Day Schools last winter once or twice in the week. In addition to this, the Marquis Townshend kindly gave a dinner of Australian meat to *all* our scholars.

Scholars' Prizes have again been awarded for the nineteenth time. There were 766 applications from eighty-four schools. So carefully were the conditions complied with that only twenty-nine cases were rejected. The prize-holders included 352 boys and 385 girls.

Your Committee are glad to report that there is no diminution in the numbers of scholars who obtain situations. Thus, eighty-seven schools report that last year no less than 1,948 left the school for work. Five old Day Schools recently reported that, out of 31,663 scholars, 15,202 are known to have obtained situations.

This manifest success of Ragged Schools has led many to hold Old Scholars' Meetings. They not only keep up a connection with the old school, but they serve to show the *after*-fruit which has been reaped.

Ragged Churches, or Adult Mission Services, form a prominent feature in many Ragged Schools. Seventy-four are conducted in our schools, the attendance being 5,516, or an average of 74.

The interest of the local friends in Mothers' Meetings does not abate. Such meetings are conducted in eighty-six schools. They are attended every week by 3,203 poor women, often baby in arm.

In connection with Mothers' Meetings, Infants' Nurseries have been established by two Ragged Schools. That in Kent Street admitted during the past nine years above 1,000 babies. The other infant nursery, which is planted amid the dustyards of Paddington, last year admitted 1,944 babies. For a fee of one penny, the infants of charwomen, &c., are carefully nursed in well-warmed, lighted, and ventilated rooms.

Labourers' Clubs, or Reading Rooms, are connected with fourteen Ragged Schools. They have an aggregate membership of 650, many of them husbands of the women belonging to the Mothers' Meetings. For a very small sum, they have the use, in the evening, of a comfortable room well supplied with newspapers and books.

Penny Banks are conducted by 102 Ragged Schools. The popularity of some has been much increased by their receiving deposits as low as one farthing—which may be regarded as so much money saved from sweetmeat shops and the petty gambling carried on by too many. Last year £12,864 was deposited in the 102 Penny Banks, by 31,799 depositors. Of this sum £1,898 remained to their credit at Christmas.

Bands of Hope are carried on by thirty-nine Ragged Schools. The united membership is 6,702.

Libraries for home reading are connected with eighty-seven Schools. The aggregate number of volumes is 16,975. They are as much prized by parents as by the scholars.

Bibles for the use of scholars either at home, in the School, or in the Children's Church, are still sold at a reduced price. They cost your Committee 10d., but are sold at the Schools for 6d. Last year 758 copies were sold, making 37,968 since this Society became practically an auxiliary of the noble Bible Society.

In their last three Reports your Committee referred to a proposition of that popular writer, "A. L. O. E.," to provide Rest for Weary Workers. The plan of giving a week's rest amid country sights and sounds to our paid teachers was again carried out last year. In the year 1869 only forty-one were so benefited, but last year sufficient funds were sent, in answer to an appeal in the Magazine, to pay the expenses of seventy-three.

Excursions for teachers and scholars were repeated by your Committee last year. The Paid Teachers' Holiday came off on July 8th, when 300 teachers met the Committee at Hampton Court. The Children's Excursion was also held at Bushey Park, on August 4th. The cost was defrayed from funds supplied in response to an appeal by your noble President. Eighteen Day Schools, with 1,800 scholars, participated in this country treat. As usual, this excursion was confined to Day Schools too poor to send their children away for one day from foul air and fouler scenes into unpoisoned air.

The Shoeblack Brigades have now completed twenty-one years of hard work, marked by most striking success. The growth of this movement from the time the Central Brigade commenced in 1851 is remarkable. During the first year only thirty-boys were employed, whose united earnings were £650. But last year an average of 362 boys were employed by the eight societies. Their united earnings were no less than £11,003 8s. 11d. The total earnings for the twenty-one years were £111,081. At Christmas there remained in the banks £785 1s. 4d., and this sum may be regarded as so much capital for use when the boys enter on more regular employment.

The number of operations—many of which they suggested—under the oversight of the two School Agents, is very great, and shows what a mighty machinery is wielded for the social elevation of the lower strata of society. Of 1,149 operations, no less than 750 are of a distinctively religious or social character.

The Magazine has now been published nearly twenty-four years. Correspondence from all parts of Great Britain, and even from America and Australia, shows how widely spread are its readers, Many of its articles have been reprinted or referred to in periodicals of a much larger circulation, and thus the interest of the public has been kept up in Ragged Schools. Not least in its beneficial influences are the sums, large in their aggregate, which have been contributed to local schools through the sketches or appeals which have appeared in its pages.

Your Committee gratefully report that the income of this Society has not only not fallen off, but was never in a more satisfactory state. This is in part due to an earnest appeal of your noble President last Christmas. The response to that appeal was most ready and liberal, and proved how deep is the sympathy of the public with our movement. Thus last year this Society received £6,884 2s. 9d.

While God so amply blesses their united labours, your Committee consider that it would not only be a mistake but a crime to curtail any of their social or missionary operations. When it is stated that the statistics supplied by the London Ragged Schools indicate that above 50,000 persons, old and young, are under their influence, it is shown how large is the class to whom we are privileged to teach Gospel doctrine and Bible living. By the many "signs following," it is evidenced that Ragged School teachers are singularly qualified to reclaim the wild tribes of our great cities, and that the plans adopted have been most potent in reaching their social and religious needs. If, then, we are not content to echo the language of Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper?" we must still dive down deep into the haunts of vice and crime and misery, and convey to them that message of Divine love which not only civilises but saves.

PROCEEDINGS AT THE TWENTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION,

HELD AT EXETER HALL ON MONDAY EVENING, MAY *6th*, 1872.

THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY, PRESIDED.

The noble President was supported by the Rev. Drs. Nolan and Tyng (New York), Revs. W. Bulkeley, B. Cassin, R. J. Cotter, W. Essery, R. H. Killick, H. McAuslane, Anton Meyer (Antwerp), Peter Meyer (Norway), W. Rose, R. J. Simpson, J. Strongohann (Norway), Drs. G. H. Davis and Cross, Messrs. Donald Matheson, J. McDiarmid, the members of the Committee, &c., &c.

The meeting was opened with prayer by the Rev. B. Cassin and by singing the hymn "All hail the power of Jesus' name."

The CHAIRMAN said,—In the absence of our valued friend Mr. Gent, who is laid upon a bed of sickness, his place will be supplied by one long known to you, who has been good enough to come up from Margate that he might discharge the duty of reading the Report. You all know him by face and by name, and therefore it is only as a matter of form that I call upon our old and esteemed friend Mr. Locke.

Mr. W. LOCKE then read an outline of the Report of the Committee, and the balance sheet for the past year.

The CHAIRMAN, who, on rising was greeted with great cheering, said:—

My very good friends, the teachers and supporters of Ragged Schools,—In the first place, I am going to announce that a friend of mine—Lord Fortescue—has sent a donation of £20 because he wishes to record his desire to support by all means in his power that system of teaching for the children of this country which shall cherish the most devout feelings, and not exclude the Bible from the schools. I could hardly from this chair address to you a few observations on the subject of Ragged Schools before saying one word to the honour and respect of an absent friend—one to whom the Ragged School movement is deeply indebted, and who now lies on a bed of sickness. You will all agree with me in bearing testi-

mony to the services of your valued friend, Mr. Gent (cheers); and you will all join with me in humble prayer that he may soon be restored to his life of activity and of love.

Well, now, you know we meet here, it cannot be disguised, under circumstances very different from those under which we assembled last year, and very different indeed from those under which we met a few years ago. There has been established by law a system of national education to which a large portion of the people will be compelled to conform, and as that waxes into greatness so I have no doubt the Ragged School system must to a very great extent diminish in effect and in operation. But, nevertheless, so long as London is London, so long as all the agencies of crime and immorality are at work, so long will there be hundreds and thousands of waifs and strays whom it will be your duty to look after and to care for, to gather as you can into Christian folds and to institute in the faith and nurture of the Lord. I am not going to part with the Ragged School system (loud cheers), at all events without saying a word in its favour; and if other people do not choose to come forward and pronounce its eulogies, I will do so, and I have no doubt you will all join me. I will undertake to say that the history of the Ragged School system exhibits a record of benefits conferred on society, and of grace bestowed by God, such as is scarcely to be found anywhere else within the range of modern history. Its life has, it is true, been short, but its activity has been almost unbounded; and when I say that less than thirty years ago there were only two schools, and that in those schools there were only ten scholars, and that in the last year you numbered some 253 schools, and had at least 50,000 persons under your influence, and when I add that from the time when the movement commenced up to the moment at which I am speaking some 400,000 children have passed under your care and tuition, some for longer periods and some for shorter, I think you will see that a great work has been achieved, and it is a work without which, I have no hesitation in saying, this metropolis would, at this present moment, have been a pool of stagnation, of physical, of moral, and of political danger to the life of the empire.

Well, now, look at the whole system which you have pursued. You have pursued a system quite unprecedented from the very beginning. You determined that your system should be a parental one, that the teachers and committees should stand in the place of the fathers and mothers, that you would not take children merely to fill them with a certain amount of what are ordinarily called "the three R's," or even with one or two little sentences about religion, and send them home with a text, and never care for them afterwards. Your whole system was embodied in the words, "This child is my child, and, so far as I can, I will guide it into a haven of safety; I will not only provide for its education, but as soon as that is finished I will place it in service, or send it out as an emigrant, or put it into some useful branch of industry." You did everything in your power to benefit the children entrusted to you. You induced them to attend Sunday Schools and other means of usefulness; and I believe that hundreds and thousands of instances might be recorded in which children plucked out of the gutter, and having before no one to care for them, body or soul, have afterwards, as adults, consulted the very teachers from whom they first heard the Word of God, and, perhaps, in an hour of distress or trouble, received from them advice and consolation. (Cheers.) Ay, but that system can be carried on only by those who work on the voluntary principle, and are impelled by the deepest sentiments of religion, only by those whose hearts are moved by the love of their Saviour, only by those who regard the children under their care as lambs belonging to the Redeemer's flock. A new system is about to be established which does not even pretend to anything of that kind, a system

which, if it does give children a modicum of the Bible, if it does tell them that there is a God who made the earth, and that we are His creatures, certainly does very little more. That system, I say, gives only a modicum of religion, and I thank God that it does even so much. But how different from that is your own system!

Take, for example, the prizes. I must dwell upon that because I believe it is a part of your system of which you have great reason to be proud, and which has produced most important results. You do not give prizes upon the mere book principle, or because a child has displayed its cleverness. That is a system of prizes which is sometimes injurious rather than beneficial. I have always contended that in our case the prize is a new starting-point in the child's career. You have proceeded on the principle of giving prizes as marks of honour to children who have kept their situations in service, and who have come year by year to show that at the least they have kept their places for twelve months and earned a good character, while some have remained in the same situation for two or even three years. That, indeed, has given an impetus to the heart; that has given an impetus to the mind and to the proper formation of a useful character. It has constituted a principle of attraction which has never been found in any institution except those which are connected with the Ragged-School movement; and I believe that it forms a great contrast to the system which is about to be established in this metropolis. Again, look at that part of your system which has consisted in giving the children treats, excursions, jollifications,—ay, that is the right word; and I cannot conceive anything more beautiful than to see a number of children who have been shut up during the whole year in pestiferous courts and alleys, and never had a mouthful of fresh air during the whole time, disporting themselves on the green grass, enjoying themselves under the canopy of heaven, and throwing out their limbs with glee as if they were astonished at the use they had of them. I would appeal to the teachers before me whether the promise of such an excursion has not had the very best moral effect on all their children; whether the possibility of being shut out from it for misbehaviour has not produced more effect than a hundred punishments or scoldings would; whether, if you told the child that if he behaved badly he should not go in the steamboat or the railway train and share in the cakes and buns connected with the occasion, has not had greater influence than any system of physical punishment that could be devised. Consider, again, how you have evoked the affections of these children. I have seen this myself. I have known children who were brought up almost in a state of ferocity, children who had never heard a syllable of kindness, children who had never seen, perhaps, a kindly expression, children who had been brought up from infancy in scenes of blasphemy, violence, and immorality; I have seen such children in all their nakedness and all their misery; I have seen a teacher, some Christian man or woman, go among such children and speak words of tenderness. At first the little thing has stood perfectly aghast; a second time the word of kindness was repeated, and still it was astonished; at the third word of kindness, accompanied perhaps with some kind gesture, tears have started to the eyes of the child, and from that hour, so great has been the effect produced by the kindness of the teacher, the whole conduct of that child has been marked by obedience, gentleness, and everything that it is delightful to behold. The effect has never been lost, and nothing else could have produced it. In that way there has been evoked what could never be evoked by mere conventional kindness, evoked by bringing heart to bear upon heart, the tender heart of the teacher to bear upon the heart of the poor neglected child. I believe that that will never scarcely occur in the schools which are

about to be instituted. I am not saying whether it could be done; but I do say that the system which we are perhaps about to part with (loud cries of "No, no")—many children must certainly be taken from us—I say that the system which we are about to part with can never be taken up by any national system such as that which has been propounded in an Act of Parliament. There are many other parts of your system to which I might refer. You have heard from the Report of the Penny Banks and of the Mothers' Meetings; you have heard of the influence exercised by children of tender years over the minds of those who were inaccessible to any other influence. In many instances, parents who would have defied the efforts of the Church clergyman, of the Nonconformist minister, of the City missionary, or even of the Bible-woman, have yielded to the influence of their own children, and hundreds of persons will bear me out in saying that parents of the humbler classes have not been ashamed to confess—and I could wish that some people of my own class resembled them in this respect—that they have received immense benefit from those who occupied a position of subordination to themselves. Let me tell you a little story which I heard the other night. I never heard a more touching story in my life. A few nights ago I was at the Stepney Tabernacle, where I took the chair at a meeting of the Sunday School Union, and a gentleman there told me something which happened recently within his own knowledge, and which I will now repeat to you. He said that a very bad, godless couple were recently induced—I don't remember how—to go and hear Mr. Spurgeon preach. He preached with the force that he always does preach. He is a marvellous man, and it might do some of you a great deal of good to go and hear him. He preached with so much force that he positively produced an effect upon the minds of those two people. When they had returned home, the husband said, "Mother, I don't like what we are doing; I don't think we are going on right; we must pray, as that man Spurgeon told us." The woman said, "Father, it is quite true; but I never learnt to pray—did you?" "No," he replied; "but there is our little Mary upstairs in bed"—she was a little girl of nine years old—"we will go up to her, and she will tell us how to pray." They went up to that little child's bedside; they awoke her, and she rose and prayed for them. The result was that they learnt to pray themselves, and they were quite ready to acknowledge how they had learnt, and how what their own child had effected their hearts. Well now, you ought to learn from this, as well as from other things, what jewels you have among these children. Do you suppose that if that child had been in a Metropolitan Board School she would have learnt all about her Lord and Saviour, and how to pray? Why, I have been told that if prayers are introduced into the Board Schools they will be sectarian, and I do not believe they will even permit the Lord's Prayer.

But now let us take a general view of the leading results of the ragged-school system. In the appeal which I sent some time ago from Cannes to the *Times* newspaper I stated—and I believe I under-estimated the case — that you ragged-school teachers have a great claim upon every human being in England, not merely in a religious, but even in a political point of view; that you have a claim upon all who desire the peace and security of the empire; that you have a claim upon all who look to the honour of this great metropolis. I rested my statements simply and solely upon the papers which I had before me. I was so astonished at the results which those papers exhibited that I determined to halve, as it were, what they established. When I came to inquire into the matter and sent papers round to persons of great experience and judgment, I had these results given to me—that from the time when the ragged-school system was

commenced down to the time when I wrote, the ragged-schools of London had placed out in service, or sent out as emigrants, or placed in industrial situations, or in some manner put in the way of obtaining a decent livelihood, 250,000 children, all of whom had been taken from the very depths of society, all of whom, male and female, if they had not been thus provided for, would have proved the cancer, the pest, the misery, the ruin—I cannot find language adequately to describe it—of society—would have added to the enormous masses who were already flooding the community with crime and wretchedness. I believe the result in that case would have been that London would have been past recovering by all statesmen and all agencies combined together for that purpose. Lord Morley, when he brought forward in the House of Lords the Bill for the amendment of the Habitual Criminals Act, stated this remarkable fact—that at that period, about two months ago, the number of cases of persons who were under penal servitude, or under the surveillance of the police, was far less than it was sixteen years before, when the system of transportation was in full operation. Transportation was at that time the means whereby we got rid of our worst criminals, and thousands and thousands of them were sent across the seas. When transportation had ceased, and we were obliged to keep our criminals at home, the number of criminals who would have been transported under the old system decreased. And to what did the noble lord ascribe that? Why, he ascribed it mainly to the operations of the ragged-school system and the various agencies referred to in the Report. And I would put it to any man who has had the slightest experience with regard to such matters, what would have been the result if the ragged-school system with all these agencies had not descended into the arena, had not gone into the depths of which I have spoken, plucked out these ragged children, and placed them in a condition of honesty and happiness? Anybody who knows the condition of London will see what must have been the effect of the superaddition of 250,000 persons belonging to the dangerous classes, without any enlarging on the subject on my part.

Well, such being the improved state in which we are placed, the Metropolitan School Board are about to introduce a new national system of education, and it is for us to make the very best we can of it. It is in vain to protest against it if we are so disposed, and the full action of power must be met on our part by the full action of wisdom. We cannot stand the competition with it, and we must be prepared to see a large number of our friends and contributors within a short time, and that a very short one, withholding their subscriptions from our schools. Feeling that they cannot contribute to the rates and to these schools also, they will fall away; it is natural and inevitable that it should be so. But depend upon it, let the Metropolitan School Board system advance as it may, it is founded upon such principles and bound down by such rules that it cannot and will not embrace thousands and thousands of those waifs and strays of a wretched existence that will be found on the surface of this great city. It will of course be for you to do what you can in the Sunday-school. But the Sunday-school is a very poor supplement indeed for the neglect of the Bible during the week. It is, in fact, little or no supplement, but it is to a certain extent a declaration on the part of a large proportion of the people of this country that the children shall have a full measure of the Bible, and not merely a small nibble—at least one day out of seven.

There will still be a great necessity for the maintenance of ragged-schools, if only for the sake of the migratory class whom the compulsory clauses will never reach. It is well known that there are in London some seventy or eighty thousand persons who change their abodes every

year, and are in a state of perpetual migration, and whom it will be difficult to catch in a Board school or a hall or any public establishment, and depend upon it, therefore, you will still have quite enough to do, quite enough to exercise your hearts and consciences, quite enough to make you feel your deep responsibilities, quite enough to make you engage with the same zeal as ever, quite enough to make you resolve to do your duty in that position to which it has pleased God to call you as teachers.

I should, indeed, deeply deplore the extinction of such a system as this. When have I, either in the study of history or in actual life, ever met with anything that I thought approached so nearly to the mind of our blessed Lord as the operations of the ragged-school system? That system has seemed to find delight in diving into the deepest recesses of human filth and human misery, and the more filthy and the more miserable have been those with whom it has had to deal the more zealously have its operations been carried on. I have been astounded when I have seen men and women working in solitude, in the depths of dirt and danger, without any hope of standing on a platform, of having their names recorded in history, or of ever being known in the circles of polite society; working on until their energies were broken down, and they were in ill-health, and exposed to almost every difficulty that could beset them, physical and moral; yet contented, happy, and even joyous, because they thought that they were as shepherds on earth to the little lambs of their Lord's flock. Never have I anywhere else seen such self-denial, such self-devotion; and the only consolation which I have had when I have seen these good men and women devoting their time, their efforts, and their health, and sacrificing much of that which might no doubt have been turned to profitable account in their own avocations, was derived from the thought that, after all, they reaped as much benefit from their teaching as the children did, and realised the great truth announced by their Lord in the words, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Well, then, this system may pass away, this system may decline, may depart like one of the shadowy pictures which we have seen; but it will have left its stamp upon the generation in which we live. Even many members of the London School Board have admitted that without our preliminary exertions they could not have done—no, not in twenty years—what they have been enabled to achieve. They found the way prepared; they found the statistics ready; they had indicated to them the spots where their agency was most required, and they have been able to do what they have done simply and solely because the Ragged School Union, with all its friends and committees, have prepared the ground. May the blessing of God, my friends, rest upon your future as it has rested upon your past efforts! I trust that in my declining years I shall yet be found engaged in active service with you so long as it shall please God to give me health and strength for the work; and of this I feel assured—that whatever may be the issue of the School Board system, the present generation certainly, and I believe future generations also, will say, "Take it for all in all, notwithstanding all its faults, we ne'er shall look upon its like again." (Loud cheers.)

The Rev. A. McAUSLANE moved the first resolution, viz.:—"That the Report, an outline of which has been read, be adopted, and printed under the direction of the Committee, and that those gentlemen whose names are included in the printed list be the Committee for the ensuing year." He said—Seldom have I listened to a more interesting, more instructive, more encouraging, more satisfactory Report than that which has just been presented. It will, of course, be printed and circulated extensively, and I earnestly hope that everyone who receives

a copy of it will read it and re-read it, and read it again, and that when he has finished the third reading he will give it to some one else to be instructed by it. May it be the means of calling forth all the new teachers that we require; may it be the means of inducing a good many ladies and gentlemen to send us books suitable for our purpose; may it be the means of awakening a deeper interest in this work; may it, my friends, evoke such liberality that, notwithstanding all his lordship has been saying about this Ragged School Union's declining—and I don't know that it will do so (loud cheers)—that when we meet next year we shall be told that the income has been raised to £10,000.

If I mistake not, there are in the Report twenty-six different points, or, to speak sermonically, twenty-six different heads. Supposing I give five minutes to each, that will be five times twenty-six. That, however, is not at all necessary; each point speaks for itself with such power, such attractions, such eloquence, that really nothing is required from me. There is one thing which particularly caught my ear while that part of the Report was being read which relates to infant nurseries. I heard his lordship say, "They are capital things." I suppose there are some here who do not like babies very much, and would rather have nothing to do with them. I should like to ask any such person—Who took care of you when you were a baby? If nobody had cared for you when you were an infant, how could you have come here to-night? (Laughter.) I bend in imagination over one little babe as feeble as any that ever was born. Methinks I hear some one say, "Let him die." If he had died, it might have been no loss to him; but it would have been a great loss to the world; for that babe grew up to be—who? Martin Luther, whose name can never be forgotten. We still want numerous reforms, and where are we to get the reformers? As the oaks of the future all lie in the acorns of to-day, so the reformers of the future all lie in the babes of to-day. I say, therefore, take care of these babies. Supposing they have come from some of the lowest walks in society; supposing some of the mothers are nothing but charwomen; out of these babies may spring up in days yet to come the very reformers that the world requires.

Let us pass on from this to say a word or two with regard to the evil which the Ragged School Union has prevented. The gleaming monarch of day cannot swerve from his orbit; the queen of night cannot deviate from her pathway; even the mysterious comet cannot wander from the course appointed for it; the ocean cannot roll up from its bed; and all the irrational creatures are unable to act contrary to the powerful and wonderful instincts by which they are governed. It is otherwise with man. On account of a tendency within him, he has a strong disposition to deviate from his way, a strong disposition to go and taste the forbidden fruit, and he will taste it if he is not prevented from doing so. There are many means of prevention. First there are the penalties provided by law. There are thousands of persons in London and in the country who are kept by such penalties from crimes which they would otherwise commit. Again, there is public sentiment, which restrains thousands from committing sins to which they are tempted. But the truths of God's word imbuing the mind and pervading the heart are more powerful agents in preventing evil than anything else. What have we been doing during the past years? Why we have been endeavouring to instil the word of God into the minds of young people, and sometimes of old people too. In our schools and all our other instruments of usefulness we have been trying to implant the truth of God in the mind. How much evil have we thus been the means of preventing? God only can answer that question, and perhaps He will not answer it until that day when all human affairs shall be wound up and settled. We have a great many juvenile sinners now, but the number would have been far greater if it had not been for the

Ragged School Union. We have a host of bad men and women, but there would have been many more than there are if it had not been for this Union. I am sorry to say that the river of sin is to-night broad, and deep, and rapid; but it would have been much broader, deeper, and more rapid if it had not been for this Union. When, therefore, I think of the amount of evil which has been prevented, I say, Go on, go on, go on, and never cease from your work until it is taken up by better hands and executed in a better way. And now, my friends, let me glance for a moment at the large amount of good that you have done. You may ask where can we find it? I believe you may find it almost everywhere. I need not say that beauty is to be found scattered over the whole surface of the physical world. There is beauty in every stream, beauty in every flake of snow, beauty in every pebble, beauty in the mountain, beauty in the lake, beauty in the sky over our heads. It is only man that is not beautiful. Now, during the last year you have been imparting beauty to hundreds and thousands of human beings. I am quite sure that a great many persons who have been connected with our operations have far more beautiful countenances now than they ever had before, and in this remark I would include the teachers who are present on this occasion. There is many a young man who, though not perhaps a Christian, can be trusted with any amount of money, trusted with any kind of document, trusted with anything that belongs to his employer; there is many a young woman who, though not perhaps a Christian, is chaste in her conduct, and if tempted to do wrong would hurl the temptation from her as a boy hurls a pebble from his hand. Ask these young men and young women to whom they are indebted for their moral beauty, and with one heart and soul they will say, "The Ragged School Union." Nor is that all, I have sometimes thought when I have seen a train coming out of a tunnel, with the sweep of an eagle and the roar of thunder, that if you could arrest its progress and turn it round so as to make it go in the other direction, that would be an image of the great change which takes place when an individual is turned from sin to holiness, from hell to heaven, from the devil to God. Now, my friends, have no conversions taken place in connection with this Union during the past year? The Report speaks of some; but, ah, bear in mind that the conversions which you can number are like the stars. The stars that we see are nothing compared with those that we cannot see; and the conversions that we can number are nothing compared with those that we know nothing whatever about. You have gone down deep into the regions of vice, and immorality, and shame, and you have lifted up some whom you found there during the year. Tremblingly you have led them to the fountain open for all sin and uncleanness; they have been washed there, they are beautiful, and by-and-bye they will be more beautiful. Oh, how beautiful will those gems that you have thus rescued sparkle in the Redeemer's crown! Let me, my dear friends, before sitting down, give you this advice. During the year that is coming aim at the conversion of those who are committed to your care. Depend upon it, that after all is the climax of our work. And aim at another thing: endeavour to induce those who seem to show signs of conversion to connect themselves immediately with some part of Christ's church upon earth. But if you would do that, allow me to say you must show the way. I have somewhere read of a distinguished general who, having to lead his army through a very difficult country, where it could not but undergo great hardships, relinquished all the privileges of his rank, dismounted from his horse, and shared in all the difficulties and trials of the humblest man under his command, thus saying to his men, not "Go on," but "Come on." In like manner, if you would be the means of converting

those under your influence, you must be converted yourselves, and if you would have them to become members of a Christian Church you must yourselves lead the way. I don't think we can any of us speak very effectually about things which we do not feel, and feel with our whole hearts. May I, in conclusion, say one word about the position of that work which the Union has been carrying on for twenty-eight years. Suppose it should be found that the system which is said to be coming is not to be compared to our own; suppose it should turn out to be far inferior to our own; suppose, which I do not think at all likely, that this system of ours should pass away, and be succeeded by one which was afterwards found to be far less beneficial in its effects. Depend upon it that in that case the people of this country, who are practical people, would soon be for going back to the old system. Depend upon it, my lord, that the good which has been done by means of Ragged Schools could not have been effected without the Bible. A school without a Bible is like a casket without the jewel, like a scabbard without the sword, like a traveller without money, like the world without the sun. My lord, I say we may sacrifice many things, but, come what may, we can never, never sacrifice the Book of God, never, never. (Loud cheers.) What would England be to-day but for the Bible? and are we going to exclude that book? (Loud cries of "No, no.") There may be many changes coming over us, but I trust that the day will never come when that book, which, after all, except the book of nature, is the only book which God has given us for our instruction and guidance, will be excluded by law from any school, from the greatest down to the least.

The Rev. Dr. TYNG, of New York, in seconding the resolution, said:—"I am here to-night because I believe that this is one of the most interesting of all the anniversaries held at this season. I came over the ocean expressly for the purpose of spending this month of May at these anniversaries. Just thirty years ago, when comparatively a young man, I spent the month of May in England, and from that day to this an intense hankering to repeat the visit has pervaded me every year at this season, till at last I said to friends in America, "I am going to spend the month of May in London, that I may be able to attend the anniversaries." Among the societies that hold these anniversaries, great and noble as they are, there is not one that to my mind contains the elements of greatness, and tenderness, and importance, and influence, and love, and kindness, in the same degree in which they adorn the whole history of the Ragged School Union; and should I be asked to-day what single gem in the coronet of the noble earl who presides this evening shines the brightest, I should say that, next to the position which he has filled in relation to the Bible Society, the inauguration and maintenance of the Ragged School Union would be to the end of time the grandest evidence of his wisdom, his skill, his philanthropy, and his perseverance in promoting the good of his fellow-creatures. There is in the whole of these institutions one great element which is a grand principle in human life, that is the element of increasing and inseparable hope beaming in the mind of the poorest child on earth. One grand element of England's greatness is, I may remark, that she never despised her poor in the line of possible elevation. There was a barber's son who assisted his father in a little shop beneath the buttresses of Canterbury Cathedral. That boy afterwards became Lord Chancellor of England, and when some snarling dog taunted him with what he had been, his retort was, "If you had been a barber, you would be a barber still." There was a poor cow-boy on the hills of Yorkshire who diligently tended a herd of cows which were committed to his charge. One frosty morning, his feet being very cold, he drove a cow to a particular spot that he might warm his feet against her in the position in which she was thus

placed. Some years after that boy became one of the venerable bishops of the Church of England, and one day, as he was driving along the road near the hillside, he stopped his carriage, got out, went to the spot where the incident which I have mentioned occurred, and, to the amazement of his servant, he knelt down in solemn prayer just where, as a boy, he had warmed his feet. O, England can never afford to despise her poor.

"Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark, unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air,"

wrote one of the most beautiful poets of England. If you were to go through the whole history of England's greatness, you would find that the grandest elements have in many cases come up from what are called the lowest classes of society. What was George Stephenson, who laid the foundations of your great system of railway communication, but a poor little cottager's boy? Your greatness as a nation—for I don't hesitate to call you great—belongs to us as well as to you. What you do in England is in many respects a pattern and example for us. The name of Shaftesbury is as much an American name as an English one (cheers), and, my lord, though you and I may never meet again on earth, I shall never give up my right to a portion of the joy that the mention of your name calls forth. I could give you many remarkable instances like these which I have just mentioned. I could take you to a large boarding-school for fashionable young ladies, and there show you a very refined lady, who is at the head of that establishment, and has always under her care from forty to sixty young ladies, whose studies she directs. In early life she was seen, as a poor hard-working girl, washing the steps before the front-door of a Roman Catholic family, with whom she lived as a servant. Her eminent religious character attracted the attention and commanded the respect of the heads of that family, and the result was that the entire family became Protestants, and were brought to a knowledge of Christ by the power of the Spirit of God. She afterwards went to one of our public schools. She rose to be a primary teacher; she rose to be the head teacher; and at last, when a number of gentlemen met to select the head mistress for a first-class school for young ladies, they picked out that former little Irish-Canadian girl to be a leader of education in that place. His lordship spoke, my friends, of the possibility of your system being given up, because a new school system had been so arranged that it would take off a large part of your working material. Let me tell you that all the efforts in America to extend free public education leave the Bible untouched. We are organising and harmonising our institutions with the aid of your experience and wisdom, and I say to you, never give up the Bible; never give up the Gospel which Christ left to be taught by believing, loving hearts. There will, I feel certain, always be a field outside the public school system for you to cultivate. It is impossible that this Ragged School system should die. It is impossible that the reputation of your noble president should die—it will live for ever. You will not be traitors in the camp of the Saviour. For you to give up what is so essential in education as the Bible is absolutely impossible. Were you to do so, the last converted man would utter against you solemn abjuration, implied in the question, "What mean you by a dereliction of duty like this?" No, the cry of England will still be, "Onward, onward!" till the reign of the Saviour on earth shall supersede that of kings. I cannot believe that there will be any retrograde movement on the part of the Ragged School Union. For my own part, after having long been engaged in works like yours, I would say, "Let this tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth rather

than I should forget the poor for whom Jesus died" No, you cannot give up, you cannot give up the Bible. I here enter my solemn protest against anything of that kind; and I solemnly dec'are it to be my firm belief that if England were to set aside the Word of God in the education of her children, that would be a gross dereliction of duty, and a signing and sealing of England's degradation and ruin. The glory of England is as dear to us as the glory of America. Mother and child, they must walk together, and absurd discussions about damages, direct or indirect, shall never sever that link of hearts which binds these two great Protestant and Christian nations together. Our great men all came from little beginnings. Abraham Lincoln, one of the grandest characters of modern times, was once a poor little neglected, barefooted boy, sent out into the woods to chop sticks and hew logs. Greatness seems almost always to arise from the bottom. You cannot have greatness beginning at the top and looking down, any more than you could have the roots of a tree at the top and make them work downwards. The poor, my friends, you will always have with you; and if you do not provide for their moral and spiritual improvement, London will become morally and religiously like one of those fogs which sometimes envelop her; deep darkness will cover her; and in the shadow of that midnight the glory of London wi l become extinct.

The resolution was then put and carried.

Dr. H. G. DAVIS moved the following resolution:—"That this meeting gratefully acknowledges the success already vouchsafed by Almighty God to their labours, and regards it as a powerful incentive for carrying on the ragged-school movement still more vigorously in the future." My resolution speaks, my lord, of "no surrender." We are about to nail our colours to the mast. Whatever may be the value and whatever the extension of our national schools, the Ragged-school Union is still determined, and that because of the success with which Almighty God has blessed it, to continue its labours in the future. The very object of a ragged school is, I take it, essentially different from that of an ordinary national school. A national school regards time almost exclusively. The Ragged-school Union regards eternity, and it uses those means which are calculated not only to make the children good citizens in this world, but still more to unfold their little hearts to the Gospel of Jesus, that they may become His disciples, follow His precepts, and finally attain His salvation. I do not think, therefore, there can be any great rivalry, or any real antagonism between the two; and, while I can only hope that the national schools may become as great a blessing as many are disposed to think they will, I feel perfectly certain that ragged-schools, the teachers of which all love the Lord, and are striving to bring little ones to Him, will be far more blessed in the minds and affections of the children instructed. I am not quite sure that success is always the best motive that we can put before our minds. There are, indeed, two passages of God's word which are very frequently cited as if they were pioneers of success. We are encouraged to labour on because we "know that our labour is not in vain in the Lord," and we are encouraged to continue sowing because we are told that "in due time" we "shall reap if we faint not." We are disposed to think that these two passages furnish us with encouragement to believe that if we continue labouring on we shall have success even here, and that even in the highest points. But I have learnt to believe that those passages contain much deeper and much stronger consolation and incentives to labour than any that are furnished by sight, any that are furnished by mere success in our labours here. Is it not that when our Lord Jesus Christ shall come He will reward all those who have diligently laboured in His vineyard, even though there may

have been no success attending their labours here! Yes, my Christian friends who are engaged in this work, I can believe that you are sustained in that self-denial to which your President has referred by something more than mere evidence of success; you are sustained by the consideration that you are sowing to the Spirit, and of the Spirit shall reap everlasting life. You cannot lose one single hour of your labours; you cannot lose one single lesson that you give; you cannot lose one single tear that falls from your eyes over those who appear most hardened. This is impossible, because He has said that when He comes and you stand before Him, He will remember the teacher who served Him in saving the little ragged one who had neither clothes to wear nor food to eat. Then it will be said to you, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom of heaven, prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for inasmuch as ye did it to the least of these ye have done it unto me." If, therefore, you seem to have no success, let this great principle be your strength and your joy. But, in fact, you have remarkable success. In reading the Report I was very much struck with the success which has been vouchsafed to you, both as to time and as to the higher interests of the soul. Think of what is said in the Report with regard to the shoeblacks. I may be told that such things as we report are only indirect blessings; but surely there is something direct in the fact mentioned by his lordship that 15,000 children, who, but for this Union, might have been inmates of a gaol, have been placed in industrial callings, where they are conducting themselves honestly and satisfactorily to their employers, and are preparing themselves to occupy positions involving still greater responsibility and trust. Here you see a number of young persons who, having been instructed in schools and Bible classes, have at last become voluntary teachers. After being instructed by others in the deep things of God, they may be seen kneeling before the communion table, and devoting themselves to self-denying labour in conveying to others the same blessings that they have received themselves. In such success as this you have abundant cause not only to thank God, but to determine that you will never, never give up ragged-schools. When you look at a poor child in rags and compare him with the sun travelling on in his strength—and yet there are elements in that child which give it a value which even the sun in all its glory can never possess—that little child may hereafter shine as a star in the firmament, and when God has rolled up the heavens as a scroll it may still be a gem in the crown of the Redeemer for ever and ever, and it is because we see in that child the immortal heir of immortal joys that we give ourselves to the work of enlightening its understanding, affecting its heart, and bringing it home to the Saviour. Therefore I say this resolution is deserving of the most hearty reception, giving thanks, as we there did, to Almighty God for the successes in the past, and determining that because of those successes we will never give up the Ragged School Union.

The Earl of Shaftesbury was here compelled by another engagement to leave the chair, but before retiring his lordship said that he was happy to announce that Mr. Locke would succeed him. His lordship retired amid the cheers of the assembly.

Mr. Locke having taken the Chair, the Rev. B. Cassin, in seconding the resolution, said:—Much as I regret the retirement of Lord Shaftesbury, I feel peculiar pleasure in speaking before a meeting that is under the presidency of Mr. Locke, and I will tell you why. Some twenty years ago, when I was beginning Sunday School work, it was my great happiness and advantage to receive the instruction of Mr. Locke in his class for Sunday School teachers from week to week. Whatever taste I may have for speaking to little children—a work of which I am very fond

—I am very largely indebted for that taste to our present Chairman, whose addresses to little ones I used often to hear, and have never forgotten. He is a well-tried friend of education in this country, and I am very thankful that he is presiding over this meeting now that our noble president is gone. In the few observations which I am suddenly and unexpectedly called upon to make, I should like to say one or two practical words as a parochial clergyman in a suburb of London, where I have been labouring for twelve years. You will have some little notion of the kind of parish that mine is when I tell you that at the last census the population was returned at 16,000; that there are, strictly speaking, no gentry in it at all; that I have no carriage people, and that none of the inhabitants are able to give a guinea at a collection. It is my happiness to have in that large parish, under my personal care, six day schools, three of which have been opened since I first went there. These six day schools accommodate 1,000 children, and while many of those children are among the poorest in the parish, some of them are children of the better class of artisans. Now I wish to tell you, as one result of my twelve years' experience there, that I never heard from any parent whatever any objection to his or her children being taught the Word of God. I believe I may say for all the parochial clergymen and all the Nonconformist ministers on this platform, that in their opinion the question of the exclusion of the Bible from schools has been raised by an extreme section of society, and not by the working classes. It is a question which has never been raised by the working classes, and I believe they do not desire that the section to which I allude should succeed. I am sure that even godless men and women—men and women who never read the Bible, and never go to the house of God themselves—rejoice that their children are taught the word of God, attend His house, and worship with His people. Lord Shaftesbury spoke of special services for children. We have in my parish two such services every Sunday. Many of us are familiar with the old custom of putting little children in the gallery at the end of the church. That custom was not one which conduced to their comfort, and certainly the making them sit through our admirable, but at the same time rather long, service in the morning was not calculated to do them very much good. Now, it delights me to think that out of the forty or fifty Sunday School teachers connected with my Sunday School, some are engaged every Sunday morning and every Sunday evening in conducting services for their scholars in one of the largest school-rooms, and others in one of the smallest. The morning special service is attended by about 250 children, who are too young to understand the Church service, and to these children a portion of the Church service is read, and an address suited to their powers of comprehension delivered. Three hundred children, and sometimes even a larger number, attend the evening special service, who but for that would probably attend no place of worship whatsoever; and I am convinced that these services, specially adapted for children, are of the greatest possible advantage. I should like to lay before you one or two little illustrations which seem to me very encouraging to those who are engaged in Ragged School teaching. One is taken from a book written by one of the most saintly and blessed men that ever lived in England—I mean the Rev. Angell James—appearing in that book in the form of a beautiful vision. In that work the author draws a most touching picture of the entrance of the glorified spirit of a Sunday School teacher into bliss. He supposed that just as that bright spirit was entering into rest it was met on the threshold of glory by another bright spirit which was sent to conduct it to bliss. He goes on to suppose, in beautiful language which

I cannot for a moment attempt to reproduce, that this glorified Sunday School teacher's spirit asks the other spirit how it was that it was sent to conduct her to glory. The other spirit says, "Don't you know me? Have you forgotten me?" The reply is, "I don't know you, I never saw you, bright spirit, before; I have never seen such a spirit as you, though I have longed to do so." Then the first spirit says, "Don't you remember little Mary So-and-so?" mentioning her name; "formerly in your Sunday School class." "Little Mary!" the other spirit replies. "What, that horrible girl that I could do nothing with, that girl on whom I thought I could never produce any impression, that girl who was the most troublesome and distressing child among all those around me, and whom I wept and prayed over so much! Indeed I remember her, I am afraid she is not here." "I am she," says the other spirit; "she was brought to Jesus Christ through what she remembered of your teaching, after having lived for some time in a course of sin, and she is sent as the very first spirit to welcome you to bliss that you may see that your work has not been in vain in the Lord." Suffer me to tell you a little anecdote before I sit down. Some of you may, perhaps, have heard of the good effect which the words and example of a little Ragged or Sunday School child have produced on an unbelieving parent. There was a certain parent whose mind was imbued with these infidel notions which, alas! anyone who knows anything of parochial work in London must be aware are spreading here to a frightful extent. This man was an advanced infidel, and he professed to be an atheist, he actually professed to deny the existence of God. At last he came to his dying bed; and how do you think he occupied himself as he was approaching the end of his career? He wrote in large characters the words "God is nowhere," and then he had those words placed over the head of his bed so that he might look at them, and in the faith, or rather in the infidelity of those words he might depart and die. He had a little daughter who was either in a Ragged School or a Sunday School. On entering his room this child saw those words and said, "Oh, father, I am so glad to see what is over the bed." The man thought she was laughing at him, and turning surlily towards her, he said, "What do you mean, child, by saying that you are glad to see those words? I send you to a school where they teach you the Bible, and if they teach you to say anything like what you have done you shall not go there again." He became very angry; but at last the child spelt the words to him thus: "G-o-d, God, i-s, is, n-o-w, now, h-e-r-e, here—God is now here." The man was so struck with the simple faith of his little daughter in spelling his blasphemous words in that way that it was the means of bringing him to be a simple believer in Jesus, and he fell asleep trusting fully for salvation in the precious blood of Christ. Let us, then, my friends, not be discouraged. Never talk of giving up Ragged Schools, but carry them on with increased zeal and energy, and though Lord Shaftesbury did speak for a moment as if he were somewhat disheartened by the prospect, we may rely upon it that his lordship will continue to lead the movement with the same vigour and determination as he has manifested for more than twenty years.

The resolution was then put and carried.

The Rev. Dr. NOLAN moved the following resolution:—"That this Meeting considers that the prospect of national education becoming more and more secular in its tone, implies the obligation that the Committee will not only continue but extend their social and missionary operations."

He said:—This resolution recognises the blessedness of the word of God as the only instrument whereby either child or adult can be "turned from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto

God." We are by no means hostile to secular education; and I think it will be found that those who have laboured most in the work of scriptural education during the last thirty years have been also the most forward, and, through God's blessing, the most successful, in promoting secular education. But we draw a distinction between the two as regards importance, and if compelled to make a choice between them we should, without hesitation, prefer what belongs to "the kingdom of God and His righteousness," trusting that in that case all other needful things would be added. That the word of God is the only, the exclusive, instrument which we can employ for the accomplishment of our great object is patent to us all. We wish not merely to make good subjects or good citizens, though that is, of course, desirable; we wish to transfer those whom we teach from the kingdom of Satan to the kingdom of God's dear Son; we wish to bestow a lasting blessing—a blessing which shall not perish in the using but be coeval with the immortal spirit of the child. This is what we have been striving to do for nearly thirty years, and I believe that God will continue to strengthen and sustain us in our efforts. I do not share in the apprehensions which have been expressed by some speakers as to the future. We have, indeed, difficulties to encounter; but we must meet them manfully, and I believe that if we proceed in our work in the same spirit as that in which it has been carried on, God will still crown our efforts with abundant success.

Mr. J. McDIARMID, Hon. Secretary of the Liverpool Ragged School Union, in seconding the resolution, said:—I hold in my hand the Report of the Committee of my own Society for the past year, and as the concluding part of it bears closely on a question which has excited so much interest this evening, I will read it to the meeting. It is as follows:—"The action of the Liverpool School Board, whilst producing a considerable effect in improved attendance at the public Elementary Schools, cannot as yet be said to have produced much effect on the lowest strata of society, whence the Ragged School children are drawn. The problem to be solved is, how the Education Act can meet the case of the Ragged School. Where parents are so depraved as to be utterly neglectful of any of their duties, or when the poor children are left as orphans to wander the streets, the Ragged School supplies, in many cases a home, in others a meal, and in all the blessings of education. If this education is inferior in secular things to the more regular training, up to Government standards, of the Elementary Schools, it may be safely said that the religious instruction of the Ragged Schools is their most important element, and has been, by God's blessing, the means of saving hundreds of poor wandering Arabs in Liverpool for time and for eternity." I thank God that the Liverpool School Board has declared that the Bible shall be used in all its schools, and that there will be no antagonism, therefore, in that town between the Government schools and the Ragged Schools. We all know that the Government has to contend with what is called the religious difficulty. Many truly pious and conscientious men, both among the clergy and the laity, believe that it is wrong to pay fees in denominational schools, because in some of these schools error is taught; while many others, both at Liverpool and elsewhere, hold exactly the opposite opinion. This is the great difficulty with which the Government has to contend. It is the glory of the Ragged School system that in that we have no religious difficulty, and that in all the schools the Bible is taught. I am thankful to say that the attendance at our schools is upwards of 8,700, and that the work is in a satisfactory and flourishing condition. Permit me to say that there we have no idea of giving up the work. (Cheers.) We believe that there will be ample room

for all the Ragged School teachers in Liverpool, and that no amount of secular instruction can do away with the necessity for that teaching in which those who are engaged in it are constrained and impelled by the love of Christ. I believe, too, that all the large body of teachers whom I see before me will always have a field of labour open to them, and I trust they will never give up.

The resolution was then carried.

The Rev. R. J. SIMPSON moved:—"That the thanks of this Meeting are due to their noble President for his kindness in presiding on the Twenty-eighth Anniversary of this Society, and for his life-long labours for the temporal and eternal welfare of the destitute and neglected classes, and that Mr. Locke be also thanked for presiding when his lordship left the Meeting."

It has been said by some one that if the poet Gray had only written that well-known piece which commences with the line, "The curfew tolls the knell of parting day" that would have immortalised him, and I am quite sure you will all agree with me that if Lord Shaftesbury's only work in public life had been the setting on foot and leading the Ragged School movement he would have gone down with honour to the grave, and his name would have been cherished by posterity. I remember an old Ragged School boy coming on one occasion to one of our meetings, and as he held up an old, greasy, and well-thumbed and well-read Bible saying to his lordship, "My lord, you gave me that sixteen years ago, and it has been my best companion ever since;" and I believe that the spectacle of that lad's glittering eyes was more gratifying to his lordship than that of any diamonds which he ever saw in the most brilliant assembly of fashion. There can be no possible doubt that you all thoroughly appreciate the noble efforts of Lord Shaftesbury in the cause of Ragged Schools. But I believe you also appreciate the efforts of the gentleman who is now in the chair, and who has now for twenty-eight years—I hope I may say this without any appearance of invidiousness as regards any of his colleagues—pulled the stroke oar in this noble boat; and I may add that a man who has been enabled to labour in such a work for so long a period has indeed cause to thank God and take courage. We have in St. Clement's Danes a ragged-school of twenty-four years' standing. A little while ago two brothers came to that school and said, "I have just had a legacy, and am going to present so much to you as a donation." My friend, the superintendent, welcomed him with a hearty shake of the hand, and told him he was delighted to see him; and after chatting with him a little while he said to me, "That fellow was, some years ago, the terror of Clare Market; he and his brother were then both street arabs of the worst kind, and they now hold highly respectable and responsible situations." What a blessed change was that! As regards the future, it will never do for us to use any words which point to possible surrender. Our motto must be "Perseverance," and to use the words of Longfellow, we must "learn to labour and to wait," remembering the beautiful words of St. Paul, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

The Rev. R. H. KILLICK seconded the resolution, which was carried by acclamation.

The CHAIRMAN said—I thank you, my Christian friends, in the name of Lord Shaftesbury, for the vote which you have just passed, though his lordship does not work for the sake of thanks, but from a far higher motive. I also thank you for the kind acknowledgment of my own services, and I will only add that during the twenty-eight years that I have been labouring in the cause of the Ragged-school Union, with my excellent coadjutors, I have never lacked for a reward.

The doxology was then sang, and the proceedings terminated with the benediction.

Papers, Original and Selected.

RAGGED SCHOOL LIBRARIES.

It is a well-known fact that the amount of reading power possessed by the adult population of England falls far below what might be expected from the number that have passed through British, National, Ragged, and other Elementary Schools. In this statement we do not now allude to the deficiency in this respect which is so generally reported by prison chaplains. For it is well known how largely they are deceived by convicted criminals; who, in order to vary their monotonous life, long to spend a portion of their time in school.

The fact, however, that large masses of the school population forget even this rudiment of learning in manhood, can only lead to the inference that the *habit* of reading was not formed in school, and so is lost when they have passed away from the teacher's control. Nor ought this painful fact to occasion any surprise. For, until recently, the bulk of books, to any but the well cultured, were either dry in style or uninteresting in matter. The library even of the pious cottager, for example, was confined to the Family Bible, Prayer and Hymn Book, and the "Pilgrim's Progress." Book Hawking Societies have recently, happily, mitigated this evil, and hence the humblest cottager can now gradually form a useful library at a very small outlay.

There are, however, two sides to this question of home-reading; for, unhappily, the fondness for reading is no proof of the love of sound reading. Taking, for example, the catalogues of the secular publishers as a criterion, what do we find? They supply this painful truth, that the number of good books now published falls far short of the number of bad or stupid books. By this test too we find that novel reading bids fair to throw into oblivion that more sound literature which can alone ennoble life, or fit man for his everyday duties.

But when we descend to a lower class, this evil becomes still more prominent. Books and serials in which vice and crime are invested with all that romance which is so powerful in its influence

on youth, are sown broadcast in London and every great city. Thus a great newsvendor stated before a Committee of the House of Commons, that he sold weekly 100 of "The Black Monk;" 100 of "The Blighted Heart;" 550 of "Claude Duval," the Noted Highwayman; 50 of "The Hangman's Daughter;" and 350 of that vile palliation of highway robbery, "Paul Clifford."

If any one doubts the extent of this abuse of the power of reading, let him visit Kent Street or the New Cut. At a recent visit to the latter place, we copied the titles of many of the serials which have a large sale in that notorious spot. These are some of the books sold to youth as well as grey-beards, all of which are seemingly framed on the principle of striking out the prohibitory "*not*" from the ten commandments, and leaving the text to teach "thou shalt steal," "thou shalt do murder." Can we then wonder at the vice and crime which are rampant in those quarters with popular reading like the following?—"Jack Sheppard," "Tales of Highwaymen," "Love and Murder," "Sixteen-String Jack," "The Black Pirate," "Tom King; or, The Road." In the same window were copies of a Police Gazette, the front page of which is dedicated to engravings wherein the incidents of suicide, murder, and other crimes are depicted in the most "sensational" style. These pictures doubtless tend largely to increase the sale; for those who are unable to read the print, are at least able to read the engravings. Round these shops children are always found; large-eyed and open-mouthed, they drink in scenes of horror which cannot but tinge and taint their future histories.

To meet these evils several societies have done a great work. Most wisely, they have not sought to crush the natural bias of the young for the wonderful or the romantic, but have sought to direct the native instinct into a right channel. Foremost amongst these is the "Religious Tract Society," which has given many free grants of Libraries to Ragged Schools. The "Pure Literature Society" has also granted Libraries to several of our schools at a moiety of the cost. In addition, the Reports of the "Sunday School Union" show that many Libraries have been given to Ragged Sunday Schools affiliated to our sister society.

By means of these societies, as well as of books placed at the disposal of the Ragged School Union, above eighty Ragged Schools have Libraries for home reading. These have an aggregate of nearly 17,000 volumes. In every case they are not only suitable

to the class, but from their tone they are well fitted to counteract the vile literature of the age.

It is pleasing to know that these Libraries are as popular with the parents as with our scholars. Consisting not of that high and dry theology which can only repel the indifferent, they render the story of the Cross attractive; and, by God's blessing, we may expect that many a one, weary with the battle of life, will be led through this agency to Him who not only bears sin, but sorrow. Again, every Ragged School which has a Library finds in that fact that it has an additional attraction. The rules being wisely framed so as to operate as reward for good conduct and regular attendance at Sunday School, there is ever a manifest anxiety to be included in the library-list. Favourite books are asked for twelve-deep, and the voluntary librarian holds anything but a sinecure post. If any one doubts this, let him visit any Ragged School on library night, and he will soon see what a potent agency for good is the Ragged School Library. We hope, then, that the time is not far off when any Ragged School which is without its Library for home reading will regard its operations as incomplete: and, like Boaz (Ruth iii. 18), may they "not be in rest until they have finished the thing *this* day."

As most good pictures have their dark background, so many of our Libraries—valuable as they are, however small or dilapidated—have their defects. One is, some consist mainly of worn-out volumes; or, more definitely speaking, there are more *sweepings* of libraries in the catalogue than is desirable. Others, too, from constant use, are worn out; or, a page being missing at the very crisis of the narrative, the reader is practically initiated into Akenside's "Pleasures of Imagination."

We are glad, then, to record that the "Religious Tract Society" has just repeated former favours to Ragged Schools by voting a most liberal grant to the Ragged School Union. This will be seen by a letter from its able secretary:—

"It gives me sincere pleasure to inform you that the Committee have this morning voted books to the amount of £150, to replenish the old Libraries in Ragged Schools, and constitute new ones. We feel that we cannot do better than entrust the distribution to your Committee. Hoping that the gift may prove a real blessing to the children, I remain, &c.,

"G. H. DAVIS."

The value of this gift is greatly enhanced by the liberty which the Committee have given to the local friends to select books from their Library Catalogue. By this means, the Libraries of above sixty Ragged Schools will be replenished ; and as there will be greater variety, as charming to age as to youth, every taste will be suited. For, strange as it may appear, yet it is a fact, that the class of books which is popular in one district is quite unsuited to another. This doubtless is due to age, or difference in acquirements. Hence it is that every properly-formed Ragged School Library has its own distinctive feature, and much judgment has to be exercised in the selection of books, or the Library would fail of its great object—namely, to develop a taste for healthy home reading.

We need scarcely add that, should any of our readers be disposed to supplement the liberal donation of the "Religious Tract Society" by the gift of books, we shall be glad to receive them for distribution. At all times there is no lack of applicants, for, like the daughters of the horseleech, the constant cry is, "Give, give!" This the officials of the Union always readily do when it lies in their power. For many striking facts testify that our Libraries have not only served to develop a taste for healthy literature, but that they have been used by the Holy Spirit as the means of leading many a reader, as well old as young, to close with the offers of grace.

DIVINE ORDER OF CHRISTIAN WORK.

BY REV. DR. CULROSS.

THERE are terrible problems to solve in connection with the ungodliness which surrounds us on all hands; and with those social abysses, where it seems almost impossible for truth and honesty to exist. It is one of the most tragically sad spectacles that can be looked upon to see a band of professing Christians blind to all these, and, with a good conscience, living to themselves.

No matter whether the state of things exists at the East End or the West, all Christians have their personal responsibility in connection with this work. They must not shift it on to a substitute, themselves not moving those burdens with one of their fingers.

With all respect for home missions, I feel satisfied that we do not go to the heart of the evil that requires to be dealt with. No money payment can stand in the stead of personal individual effort where it is open to us. All Christian men and women must take their providentially assigned part in

Christ's work, according to the measure of the special quality of the gift of Christ. They must become living tools in the hand of the Living Worker.

I am not going to become a censor. I believe that Christ's work is done now in a way that it was not in past times. Every day we meet with a biography of some lowly sufferer, who made it grandly eloquent that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is living in human hearts, and is as mighty to-day as in the first Christian age. We all know individuals who sought no human reward or notice, who were yet more potential on the side of goodness and against evil than their rulers, even by virtue of the forces of their Christian character—the outcome of the life hid with God. But still, while keeping this in view, a regret arises that Christian men and women are so indifferent and so apparently untouched by the world's woes; that there is such a desire to draw in wealth and respectability into our churches in place of saving souls, and that there is so little of the anointing of the Holy Spirit of God. We have to regret that it is so barren of spiritual result.

There are many reasons for searching of heart amongst us. One reason which I would single out why we have such failures is our disregard of the Divine order according to which work proceeded. If a Christian Church violate Christ's spiritual order it could not expect a full blessing. It is therefore of high importance that we should distinctly know what the Divine order is, and that we should accept it. There are fixed conditions to be observed.

The first condition is life and work. It is necessary that our works should be the outcome of the love of God in the heart, and I ask how it is with you in that respect. Do not some of our works, right in themselves, arise from strife and vainglory? are they not the product of a mere foolish excitement, or purely routine? In our Sunday Schools did we never employ those of whose life in God we had no reasonable assurance? Did we never press into the service those whom we had no right to do? If we must answer in the affirmative, I do not see on what ground we can object to an unconverted ministry. All Christian work must be the outcome of spiritual life, exactly as words in prayer should be the expression of an intense spiritual desire.

The second fixed condition, determining the order in which our work was to come, I will indicate by saying—Divine appointment and work. When Christ found a man or woman he gave work to do for which he or she was individually suited. It was not the doing of *something* that was required, but the doing of a *given* thing. Paul and his companions were forbidden to preach the Word in Asia. There are subtle and powerful tendencies in us to decline providentially assigned work and to choose our own work. Some would like to do great things, and to gird themselves for heroic action, and are always waiting for this kind of work and doing nothing. The most useless people in the Christian Church are those who are always for doing something great, and who will not do the little things. If we prayerfully inquire of the Lord what he would have us to do, he will make it plain what is that work.

FRENCH MISSION SCHOOLS.

Some "wiseacres" have just discovered that Ragged Schools have been a mistake from the outset; and that if "the three R's" are taught by certified teachers, vice and misery will become things of the past. Happily, our true-hearted British workers have not imbibed this heresy; for they know that fallen humanity cannot be reformed by a knowledge of the "rule of three." Hence they believe that as elementary instruction will necessarily become more and more secular in its tone, the greater will be the need for their social and missionary labours.

Nor is that all: Spain and Italy, just awoke from the nightmare of Popery, have also started Ragged Schools with signal success. It is also pleasing to find that France in the hour of its agony has been impelled to imitate the example set in London.

I.—LYONS RAGGED SCHOOL.

In the great commercial capital of France, Lyons, a Ragged School has just been opened with every sign of success. A letter just received by a member of the Evangelical Alliance states that the work in Lyons is most encouraging, and appears to the Christian heart to have no limits to its extent. To be among 400,000 souls who know not the Gospel is an incessant call on the servant of God for the greatest activity, for the utmost sympathy, and for the putting forth of every power. It is indeed a holy mission.

One thing is very gratifying, the co-operation of some pious young persons, taken particularly in connection with a Ragged School in one of the poorest and most revolutionary districts. There are already sixty or eighty children in attendance. This is a good beginning. A zealous evangelist who goes through France with a Bible-carriage has also commenced public religious services, which have been very successful amongst old and young.

II.—CHANTILLY STABLE-BOYS' SCHOOL.

A similar mission is carried on among the stable-boys at Chantilly, the Newmarket of France. Mostly from Yorkshire, they are exported from this country by those "fast" members of the English aristocracy who unhappily are doing their utmost to introduce the vices incident to the English turf into France. These jockeys and stable-boys, though well paid, are an ignorant uneducated class, knowing little save the facts or the fictions connected with "horseflesh." Though nominally Protestant, they know as little of the doctrines of Christianity as the Fetish-worshippers of Central Africa. Unhappily, as the great races of France are usually run on Sundays, the Lord's day brings no rest to these poor lads.

Until, in fact, the Wesleyan ministers stationed in Paris met their social and spiritual needs, they were grievously neglected by the aristocratic English colony by whom they had been imported into France. Now they aretaught not only the "three R's," but the Gospel of Christ in all its fulness is preached to them. A writer in the *Watchman* gives the following account of this movement. He says that the success of the Chantilly mission is

mainly owing to the indefatigable exertions of a Christian lady who, in 1869, impelled by love for France, left her home in England and came to labour among the Chantilly stable-boys. Lately the Rev. W. Butters visited our mission-station at Chantilly. Fifty persons, among whom were forty jockeys and stable-boys, sat down to a plentiful tea, after which the public missionary meeting was held. The chapel was full, and the jockeys were all eye and ear during Mr. Butters' most interesting and profitable address, which lasted an hour and a quarter, but seemed to have been hardly half an hour.

We may then well echo Galileo's words, and say of our plan, "It moves!" And we cannot but think that when those great rivals, Germany and France, are led to open schools on the English model, it ought to prove most encouraging at this crisis of our history.

GOLDEN LANE HOT-WATER HOUSES.

In that terrible rookery Golden Lane there are two kinds of lodging-houses largely frequented by tramps and beggars. One is the regular licensed "lodging-house for travellers," the other is known by the name of "hot-water house." Why the latter is allowed to defy the law is one of those mysteries which the police alone can solve.

A writer in the *Daily Telegraph* recently gave this sketch of both classes of houses:—

"There are lodging dens in Golden Lane which no decent man dare enter. In one such place, on some urgent occasion, the attempt was made, and swiftly followed by the expulsion of the rash peacemaker, roughly handled, and with his hat smashed. Two policeman were outside the door, and witnessed the ejection; and one of them remarked, 'Hallo! you like it better than we do. You wouldn't catch us in there for a trifle!'

Terrible stories are still whispered about the worst of these Golden Lane lodging-houses, of which there are seven that, in the aggregate, 'make up' about five hundred beds every night. I am informed, on good authority, that occasionally the scenes to be witnessed in at least one of these houses are appalling. This is after the police have made their last inspection for the night, in accordance with the terms of the Lodging-house Act. The most favourite entertainment at this place is known as a 'buff-ball,' in which both sexes and all ages madly join, stimulated with raw whisky and the music of a fiddle and a tin whistle.

The proprietor of one of these tramps' lodging-houses is a blind man—a terrible fellow, fierce, and old, and Irish. He was the principal figure in a pretty picture that might have been seen in Golden Lane some time ago. His old domicile had grown so ruinous that it was found necessary to turn him out and pull it down. But he had an affection for the venerable pile, and was loth to budge. Drunk and furious, he seized the leg of a bedstead, and, standing on his imperilled threshold, swung the formidable weapon round his sightless head, shrieking forth his determination to dash out the brains of any policeman who dared approach him.

Improved as these places are said to be of late, the best of them are

still far from perfect. Accompanied by my friend, at ten o'clock at night, I visited one of the most creditably conducted. It was as easy of access as a common public-house. The street door was wide open, and at the end of the long passage we found the 'kitchen,' a room between thirty and forty feet long and, say, fifteen wide, provided with a few forms and tables, and with a vast fireplace, round which were clustered a crowd of supper cookers, each one superintending his own fork or skewer, and 'doing' to his liking his rasher or 'bloater.' About thirty persons were present—a few girls and women, but the majority of the male sex; and there was not *very* much objectionable behaviour visible. Of course the place was evil smelling, and the floor was not *quite* so white as driven snow; but it was easy enough to see how, under lax supervision, it might in a week become ten times worse. The common lodging-house is not like the casual ward, although, perhaps, the class of lodgers is pretty much the same.

At the former place, before an applicant for a bed is admitted to the sleeping ward, he must undergo the ordeal of the bath; moreover, his clothes are taken from him, and kept in a closet till the morning; but at the Golden Lane establishments a lodger is privileged to go to bed as dirty as he likes, and, as a rule, he avails himself to the full of the considerate arrangement. In this one lodging-house ninety occupants of beds were nightly provided for.

I went up-stairs, and into the many floors of the great rambling old house—at one time a mansion of considerable pretensions, judging from the width and rich carving of the oaken stairs—and peeped into the various dormitories. Paid inspectors visit these places now, and it is to be presumed that they properly attend to their duties, and that everything is as it should be. I very much question, however, if Mr. Inspector would care to pass a night there himself.

The different floors are apportioned to single men, single women, and married 'couples;' and I certainly cannot approve of the 'partitioning' system, which, as I am informed, is universally practised in these places as regards the sleeping accommodation of the 'married.' Economy of space is the first and foremost consideration with the Golden Lane lodging-house keeper; at the same time, he should not too flagrantly defy the law which declares that every married couple must be accommodated with a chamber in which to sleep by themselves. He does not actually defy this decent enactment, but he holds on by the feather edge of it. He slices up a big room into six, say—each compartment being just large enough to contain the narrowest of truckle bedsteads, and maybe eighteen inches to spare for standing-room. But the partitions, which are mere matchboard, do not extend from the floor to the ceiling. They are no higher than those which divide box from box in an ordinary coffee-room, and at bottom there is a space through which an adult could pass with perfect ease. It is a farce to call them separate chambers. Eightpence is the price of one of these double beds, and 'children must be paid for.' 'But supposing the child is a mere baby?' 'Well, it counts as one,' replied the obliging young person who 'showed us over'—a regulation that must come very hard at times on an outcast young couple with their only ragged fledgling.

But the licensed lodging-houses of Golden Lane, with all their ingrained, home-bred nastiness and unwholesomeness, and the undoubted facilities which they afford the predatory tribes of London for continuance in their nefarious ways, are by no means the most abominable sleeping-places to be found in this delectable neighbourhood. Here may be obtained for the seeking a kind of accommodation that, so far as my experience goes, is unknown even by name in any other of Squalor's head-quarters. The houses which affect the peculiar branch of the lodging business in question are known as 'hot-water houses;' and, though they drive a roaring trade, it is unlicensed and illegal, and might be put down at a single day's notice, or at no notice at all, did the police authorities think it worth while to move in the matter. They are, as a rule, small houses, some containing only three rooms; and, for the benefit of our sanitary guardians who may plead ignorance of the existence of these horrid places, it may be mentioned that they are to be found in 'Little Cheapside,' 'Cow-heel Alley,' and 'Hot Water Court'—the last being a double row of little houses that possibly claims the honour of having originated the cheap and terribly nasty system which I am now about to explain. They have no sort of special convenience, excepting perhaps that the cooking utensils are somewhat more capacious and numerous than are commonly found in a human habitation which boasts of, say, a kitchen, and four rooms ten feet by twelve. They are not provided with beds or bedsteads. It would be regarded as a shameful waste of precious space to introduce such luxuries. It would be impossible to plant more than two bedsteads in a chamber of the dimensions just described, and equally impossible even by the most ingenious packing, to squeeze more than six lodgers in each bed. Now this would not pay at a penny each—the sum charged. About twenty in a room is the expected number, and they lie in their own rags on the ground. I say, 'about twenty,' because that happened to be exactly the number discovered under shockingly painful circumstances by a gentleman whose testimony is indisputable. He was called to a hot-water house to comfort a little girl dying, and nearly dead, of fever. He found the sick child lying in a corner of a parlour; and, the hour being after bedtime, the 'hot-water' lodgers had made themselves comfortable for the night. 'The floor was so thickly strewn with adults,' says the gentleman to whom I have referred, 'that it was next to impossible to approach the fever-stricken little girl without treading on them. I counted them, and there were *nineteen*.' The child died in the night; and the nineteen jolly beggars set out next morning, with their rags loaded with fever, to spread it through the town.

The majority of these hot-water lodgers are cadgers and beggars by profession. It is not invariably because they cannot afford it that they do not patronise the fourpenny houses, but rather because they would sooner 'pig' together on the boards than lie on separate beds; and threepence saved is threepence earned. To be sure, they might save the entire fourpence, and obtain, besides, something to eat that night and next morning. The doors of the casual wards will open to their knocking; but in this tribe only your loafing scoundrel, who is too lazy even to beg, avails himself of the parochial asylum. The professional beggar finds that it does not

'pay.' He has his daily occupation, and if he would make good money, he must follow it industriously. A rich idea, indeed, to be sweating for three hours over a couple of bushels of stone, in payment for a bed and half a pound of bread, when as much time spent in judicious whining and cadging will return from a shilling to eighteenpence.

The 'hot-water' lodger is expected to be something more than a person who merely pays his penny, selects his pitch on the parlour floor, and next morning takes his departure, perhaps to apply for a bare lodging at the end of the day. He is supposed to 'use the house' in the daytime; and it is this last-mentioned custom that gives these lodging-houses their name. A big pot of water is kept constantly heated on the hob of the kitchen fire, and payment of a halfpenny secures the privilege of the loan of a jug and boiling water to make tea or coffee. Lodgers are at liberty to bring in their cooked meat to eat; but, if they require the loan of the frying-pan, an additional halfpenny is charged. Except for professional 'mudplungers'—beggars whose harvest time is when they can wade in the middle of the road and in the pouring rain, with an agonising display of saturated rags and mire-soddened naked feet—wet weather is unfavourable. It is bad for street-begging, because the few people about are 'buttoned up,' or their charitable hands are hampered with the care of an umbrella; it is bad for house-to-house beggars, because lady-housekeepers wax wroth at the sight of miry footprints desecrating the purity of their hearthstone steps; so it comes about that a rainy day means a crowded 'hot-water' house from morning till night. For this daylight accommodation a penny a head is charged, the use of the frying-pan being liberally thrown in."

SCHOOL AGENT'S WORK—No. 1. WEST AND SOUTH.

From Mr. Hytche's Eighteenth Annual Report we make the following extracts, as showing the state of the Ragged Schools in the west and south of London.

In the western and southern districts there are SEVENTY-SEVEN institutions, 42 of these being in the south.

During the past year I paid the following

VISITS.

Sunday Schools	83
Day Schools	385
Night Schools	205
Special Business and Conferences	84
Local Committees	7
Parents' Meetings	22
Public and Social Meetings	21
	807

It is satisfactory to state that, in spite of the agitation about the future of Ragged Schools, the local friends have not discontinued but rather have

increased their machinery. This will be seen by a list of the following 36 NEW OPERATIONS, viz. :—5 Sunday Schools, 1 Day School, 7 Night Schools, 5 Banks, 4 Clothing Clubs, 3 Parents' Meetings, 2 Bands of Hope, 2 Ragged Churches, and 8 Children's Churches.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS

are conducted by SIXTY-NINE institutions. Ordinary Sunday Schools are conducted in three other buildings.

Of these, 22 meet in the morning, and are attended by 1,133, or an average of 61. Fifty assemble in the afternoon, when 5,371 scholars attend, or an average of 105. The 42 which meet in the evening are attended by 6,800, or an average of 166.

The nominal staff of teachers is 1,204, but many, especially in the west, only teach on week days. The actual average of Sunday teachers is only 850. As one result, most classes are too large; and in several instances I have found the superintendent obliged to take a class, to the general disorder of the school. Here it is needful to protest against a growing evil —namely, the number of teachers who either come after or in the midst of the opening exercise. As results, other teachers are disturbed by the scholars of the vacant classes; the scholars of such classes too often imitate their teachers, and come late; and the superintendent, in addition to his other onerous duties, is burdened by doubts whether these teachers will come at all.

Many of the western Sunday Schools are principally taught by the assistants of linendrapers; but, on the outbreak of smallpox last year, they were ordered by their employers to leave off teaching on pain of dismissal. This denuded the schools of some of their best workers, and seriously diminished the attendance. Thus, Davies Mews from 250 fell to below 60. On the cessation of this plague they were permitted to resume their work, but the attendance at such Sunday Schools has scarcely recovered itself.

New Infants' Class Rooms have been either built or appropriated by Brook Street, Mansfield Street, and Bridge Street. The three rooms will accommodate 370. Mansfield Street has had an infants' room and a gallery built, which will hold above 200. By this means not only is the general order improved, but, what is essential to infants, they can be taught separately and collectively.

The order of most Sunday Schools is all that could be desired. But there is an occasional outbreak, when whistling, letting off crackers, knocking down forms, and defiant language, prevail. But this is rarely the case when the staff is sufficient, or when teachers arrive *before* the opening exercises. By way of inducing order, Ogle Mews suspends the names of excluded scholars, with the period for which they are excluded. The teachers of Broadway, Brook Street, and Davies Mews precede their classes when dismissed. This plan has operated most successfully, and deserves general imitation.

As a means of retaining those scholars who from age or rise in the social scale do not like to attend Sunday School, eighteen schools have instituted SENIOR BIBLE CLASSES. They are attended by upwards of 400. Some make excellent substitute-teachers when the staff is small. It would be well

to keep this object in view, as thereby Senior Bible Classes would become Training Classes. Some of the members are under deep spiritual impressions, and many of the communicants of our schools have traced their personal religion to these classes. This is eminently the case at Robert Street, Druid Street, Amicable Row, and Colliers Rents, the teachers of which meet their scholars on week nights for private and *individual* converse on spiritual subjects.

An important addition to Sunday Schools is the CHILDREN'S CHURCH. Out of 20 now attached to the schools in my district, 16 have been established during the past two years—several at Agent's suggestion. They are attended by 1,800 boys and girls, or an average of 90. The service at Bridge Street, suggested by Agent, has been so successful, that in addition to that held on Sunday evening, a Children's Church is also held on Thursday evening. At Bell Street a Children's Church has superseded the Ragged Church, which had failed. At this service nearly 200 of the worst boys and girls of Lisson Grove attend every Sunday evening. Having aided several, I can testify how much this service is appreciated; and it is my earnest wish that the plan be tried in every Sunday School, especially on Lord's-day morning, when the attendance at most Sunday Schools is either thin, or irregular and late.

Forty-three Sunday Schools conduct TEACHERS' PRAYER MEETINGS. At most, elder scholars by Agent's advice are invited to remain. At Jurston Street, for example, 70 elder scholars were present at their own desire. In addition, the female teachers invite the girls to a monthly Prayer Meeting. As the rule is free prayer, some of the elder girls pray spontaneously. The teachers of Lancaster Street also hold a Scholars' Prayer Meeting on Saturday evening. It is well attended, and many pray fervently.

DAY SCHOOLS

are conducted by *Forty-eight* institutions. Fourteen others hold cheap Pay Schools. The Ragged Day Schools may be thus classified:—7 Boys', 6 Girls', 14 Infants, and 40 mixed; making 67 Day Schools, conducted by distinct teachers in separate rooms.

In March 1871 the numbers returned as registered were 11,333. Of these 8,014 were present at my examinations. They are taught by 83 teachers, who are aided by 180 paid monitors, mostly very efficient helpers.

Last year the infants were divided from the older scholars in Cottage Place, Windmill Street, and Brook Street, and taught in separate rooms. The infants of Bridge Street were removed from a dark room on the basement to a room which was divided from the mixed school by a movable partition. In every case this has improved both health and order.

As hitherto, I have steadily watched the status of the scholars. That many parents could afford to pay a small school-fee there can be no doubt, but they prefer to spend in gin and tobacco what ought to be spent on education. Unhappily, such children are usually the worst off in the school —ragged in attire, dirty in person, and not rarely half-starved. Here it is but just to say that the Day Schools connected with the Privy Council have

not—as was at first feared—admitted a higher class of children. This is mainly due to the fact that the Curates or Scripture Readers of the churches with which these schools are connected know, from home visitation, the really necessitous cases, and refuse to admit any other.

I have steadily set my face against wearing beads and similar ornaments. Thus several hundreds of girls were spoken to privately last year, and the necklaces were ordered to be removed. In some cases, foolish mothers threatened to remove their children if the order was enforced, but I do not know of one case where the threat was carried out.

Last year I examined fifty-three Day Schools. The subjects of examination were the life and work of Christ, reading, writing, arithmetic, and notation. In reading, an easy chapter in Matthew was selected. Those who read without spelling were marked good; and those who had to spell any word, moderate. In writing, I dictated simple sentences, such as, "Where will you be a hundred years hence?" "Do you love Jesus?" By this plan, not only was the character of the penmanship noted, but the spelling was tested. At these examinations 8,014 were present, of whom 4,574—all of whom had attained six years—were individually tested. The results are as follows:—Life of Christ, good, 132; moderate, 529; passed, 661. Reading, good, 896; moderate, 725; passed, 1,621. Writing, good, 1,139; moderate, 1,457; passed, 2,596. Addition, 2,422. Subtraction, 1,199. Multiplication, 1,123. Division, 814. Multiplication table, 822. Notation, 3 figures, 1,249; 4 figures, 939.

NIGHT SCHOOLS

are held by *fifty-five* institutions. They are thus divisible:—boys, 30; girls, 18; mixed, 17; or 65 distinct Night Schools. The number on the books is 4,830, of whom about 3,000 attend regularly.

They are taught by 47 paid teachers, of whom one quarter were new last year. Fifteen schools are either aided by or solely taught by volunteers. Richmond Street and Park Walk may be mentioned as examples of what Night Schools can effect in taming juvenile roughs, when taught by a large staff of voluntary teachers. Could such teachers be multiplied, there can be no doubt that the attendance at Night Schools would speedily be doubled, and some others opened.

The order of most Night Schools is all that can be expected. But many are much annoyed by boys or girls outside—some formerly expelled, but mostly those who cannot be induced to attend any school, Sundays or week days. As indicating what the well-conducted scholars have to contend with, the following cases are extracted from my diary. *Brook Street.*—The juvenile roughs outside kept many from entering, or struck the scholars violently. Occasionally a shower of stones came through the windows opened for ventilation. *Grotto Passage.*—Elder girls, or more definitely speaking, young harlots, struck most of the scholars as they entered, and rushed up-stairs whooping like maniacs. *Webber Row.*—The juvenile roughs of New Cut rushed up the ladder staircase which leads to the boys' room, or stood on the empty cottages outside, shouting and throwing stones at the boys as they entered. *Cottage Place.*—The boys and girls outside slapped

the faces of the scholars as they entered. They plugged the keyhole with clay, plastered the windows with mud, and threw stones at the door. *Marigold Place.*—A large number of boys—some of them formerly expelled—used the windows and wall of the school as a place for pitching their balls. Occupying the forecourt as they did, entrance was difficult. *Amicable Row.*—Stones were thrown at the scholars as they entered, one of which nearly knocked down the master as he opened the door. *Ernest Street.*—Shouts of laughter, varied by throwing peas and knocking down forms, caused several to be expelled. These, with others, molested all who entered, and rendered admittance difficult. In every case, Agent actively interfered; and though he generally succeeded—as often by threats as by persuasion—yet these annoyances were repeated the next night of meeting. These, and similar facts, prove that there are large masses of youth still *outside* Ragged School influence. This painful fact can be tested by all who will visit Lisson Grove and Westminster in the west, or New Cut and Kent Street in the south. For in those places groups of lads can always be seen, especially in the evening, "larking," gambling, and fighting. The bulk of these juvenile "roughs," I doubt not, could be attracted into Night Schools if Christian teachers would volunteer their services. Painful, then, as it is to witness the above scenes, it is still more sad to find that so few Christian men and women try to socialise and save these waifs and strays.

Many subsidiary plans of usefulness are adopted by teachers of Night Schools. Thus the secretary of John Street reads some interesting book once a week. The voluntary teachers of Exeter Buildings and Harrow Street give weekly a singing lesson. The Lower Park Road master in winter supplies a cup of coffee and bread and butter once a week to the ragged Irish boys who throng his school. The master of Clarence Street, who holds the Government certificate for drawing, gives lessons in engineering drawing. Other Night Schools occasionally give lectures, which are very popular.

INDUSTRIAL CLASSES.

There are eight Boys' Industrial Classes in my district, with about 200 members. In 40 Girls' Schools 1,500 are taught needlework and knitting. In every school connected with the "Destitute Children's Dinner Society," the girls help to cook the dinner, and wait at table. Some elder girls are also paid to scrub the floor of the schoolroom, under the direction of the mistress.

SANITARY.

Never since the commencement of my work in January 1854, was there so much serious illness as during the first nine months of last year. Fever and smallpox—the latter especially—raged in Chelsea, Marylebone, Westminster, and Bermondsey. Ogle Mews and Jacob's Island had to be closed through the outbreak of smallpox. Often as many as seventy were absent from other Day Schools through this cause. There can be doubt that thousands were infected with smallpox, of whom more than 200 died.

Some of the newspapers—contrasting our buildings and those built at the partial cost of Government—have stated that Ragged Schools are ill lighted,

and worse ventilated, and altogether unfit for school purposes. That this is the fact in a few cases cannot be doubted; but the large majority of our buildings are all that can be required; and if the "surroundings" were at all equal to the inside, nothing more could be desired. This will be seen when it is stated that fifty-four have been built as schools, and twelve more have been so adapted or improved as to render them quite fit for school purposes.

Some Day Schools are overcrowded; and others—usually from *outside* evils, or the dirty linen of the infants—always smell foully. To remedy the evils connected with too limited space, infants' rooms were added to Brook Street, Windmill Street, Cottage Place, and a large room built for the infants of Mansfield Street. By this means above 400 infants were removed from the mixed schoolroom. The infants of Bridge Street, too, were removed from an underground room to a large room on the first-floor. For these, a gallery holding 150 was built. York Mews lease having expired, a stable was taken, and adapted at a cost exceeding £50. Grafton Mews School-room, which is held over a stable, has been rebuilt, and, instead of three small dark rooms, there is one large well lighted and ventilated room.

One great defect of most of our Day Schools is the want of playgrounds. Only seven have this place of exercise, six of these being attached to suburban schools. Considering the influence playgrounds have, not only on health, but on the development of character, it is to be regretted that, when schools are built, provision is so rarely made to meet this want.

BANKS AND CLOTHING CLUBS.

In my district there are 40 Penny or Farthing Banks. The Clothing Clubs number 36. There are also 4 Men's Provident Societies. These are all working satisfactorily. They have not only induced foresight in a most improvident class, but the Clothing Clubs have so changed the aspect of many schools as to render visitors often doubtful whether children above the class have not been admitted.

PARENTS' MEETINGS

may be divided into two sections—the semi-secular, and the directly evangelistic. In the first are included the Fathers' and Mothers' Meetings. Of these, 40 are for mothers, with 1,500 members. The 10 for male adults have an aggregate attendance of 300. As in most of the Mothers' Meetings, needlework forms an important part of the evening's proceedings, and as Clothing Clubs are attached to the bulk, thrift and neatness are taught at the same time. Most of the adult meetings supply a club-room, without the evils necessarily attendant on the tap-room. Probably if there were less smoking, and still less playing at games of skill, these club-rooms would prove more socially beneficial.

Ragged Churches are attached to forty schools. The average attendance is 1,700, or 42 per gathering; chiefly females.

Many other plans of usefulness might be reported, such as Bands of Hope, Infants' Nurseries, Libraries, Barrow Clubs, &c., all of which are in a healthy state, and are doing much to improve the social aspect of the districts where they are planted.

It only remains to add a few cases where my advice has been found useful.

1. The schoolrooms in *Brook Street* and *Cottage Place* were overcrowded. These had Infants' Rooms built, for Sundays only; but they are now, by Agent's advice, permitted to be used by the Week Day School, to the manifest improvement of order.

2. *Noel Street* Night School closed at eight. On the appointment of a new master, the hour, by Agent's advice, was changed to nine. An additional night was also added for boys, and a Girls' Night School, conducted by volunteers, opened.

3. *Pear Street* Sunday School was not open before a quarter to four. This kept down the attendance. Reorganised, and opened at the usual hour, the attendance has doubled. A Girls' Industrial Night School was also commenced. There is also a prospect of a Mothers' Meeting being instituted.

4. *York Mews* schoolroom was occupied by a kind of platform to the extent of about one-sixth of the area. It was not only unsightly and useless, but still further cramped the small space. Following Agent's advice, this has just been removed. The ventilation has also been improved.

5. Agent had continually to complain of the foul smells of *Grafton Mews*. The Sunday and Night Schools were at length abandoned by the teachers. The school was rebuilt in autumn, and greater space, together with better ventilation, has abated this evil. Both Sunday and Night Schools are resumed.

6. *Victoria Place*, Peckham, Day and Night Schools, were to have been closed in October through want of funds and diminished local interest. As this Ragged School is the only one in Peckham, it is of great value to a needy district. The Committee, when met by Agent, agreed with his advice to carry on the school with increased aid of Ragged School Union, and thus this old and valuable school has been saved.

7. *Walker Street*.—The Sunday School was closed for want of teachers. Agent has induced the new master, whom he recommended, to reopen it. Through adoption of Agent's advice, the attendance at Night School has increased one-third. The bulk of the scholars, too, are older than formerly.

8. *Bridge Street*.—This school was closed on Sunday evening, without any prospect of being opened, as teachers could not be obtained. Agent having advised at the annual meeting that a "Children's Church" should be opened on Lord's-day evening, the experiment has proved so successful that a children's service is also held on Thursday evening. The average exceeds 100.

On the whole, the state of the schools may be regarded as satisfactory. Anxiety is felt in some quarters as respects the ultimate influence of the School Board on our Day Schools; but most of the larger ones think that they can hold their own. But, whatever be the outcome of the new system of elementary instruction, it is pleasing to know that the missionary spirit of the local friends has not abated; and hence we may expect in the future, as in the past, that the teachers will be found "wise to win souls."

DESPAIR OF NONE.

Among the many interesting cases which Mrs. Vicars, of Brighton, has met in her devoted labours of love among the lost, one is especially worthy of being recorded, as illustrating the power of the Word of God, and as teaching us to *despair of none.*

One morning Mrs. Vicars received an anonymous letter from a district visitor, giving her the address of a woman whom the letter stated to be one of the worst characters in Brighton, and a great corrupter of others: so bad, indeed, that no respectable person had thought of entering her house for many a long year. But as the writer had been told that Mrs. Vicars did not shrink from visiting the vilest, would she go and see her? adding, that could any impression be made on her, it might be the means of saving scores. That same day saw Mrs. Vicars on her way to the house named in the letter. The door was opened by the very woman, and Mrs. Vicars at once boldly stated the errand on which she had come.

"I have no time to hear about such things," the woman answered, roughly. "Religion is all very well for you gentlefolk, but poor folk can't afford it; one must live."

"And we must die," Mrs. Vicars said, solemnly.

"Well, that's true, and I know all about that," said the woman, with an odd boastfulness. "I am not so ignorant as some; I warn't always like what you see me now; why, up there," she added, pointing to a top shelf, "I have got a beautiful large Bible I bought with my own money—years ago it is now."

"A beautiful large Bible!" exclaimed Mrs. Vicars; "how I should like to see it! Do you think you could get it down for me?"

"Well, ma'am, I'll try; but I'm afraid it will nigh smother you with dust; for it is right on the top shelf, where I can't get at it with the duster."

So, with the combined help of a table and a chair, she managed to get the Bible down. Alas! the dust stood so thick on it, that, in Whitfield's strong words, she would have no difficulty in writing "damnation" with her own finger on the whitened cover. But, wiping it carefully with the corner of her apron, she laid it triumphantly down on the table before Mrs. Vicars.

"Well, that is a beauty!" exclaimed Mrs. Vicars; "and what a beautiful print too! Can you read it?"

"Read it! I should think I can, indeed; at least I can when I have got my glasses; but unluckily I happened of an accident with one of them."

"Can you find them? for if you will give them to me, I will get them mended for you."

"Well, I can't say as how I know exactly where they are; but I think I can lay my hand on them somewhere," she said, proceeding to rummage in several drawers. Mrs. Vicars joined in the hunt; and during the search for the glasses the ice seemed to melt, and they got quite friendly.

"Here they are!" exclaimed Mrs. A., producing them at last from among a heap of odds and ends.

"And a capital pair of glasses too," rejoined Mrs. Vicars: "this one is cracked; we must have a new glass for that eye; but the other is all right; just try it," she added, opening the Bible. So, putting the odd glass to her right eye, the woman read a few words.

"You do read well! why, you are quite a scholar;" and so Mrs. Vicars kept on turning the pages, and getting her to read one verse after another, till she found the passage she wanted.

"There is nothing amiss with that glass, is there? Read this."

And the woman read, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Slowly she read the solemn words, through the one old spectacle-glass; but, as she read, Mrs. Vicars felt one great warm drop after another falling upon her hand, which rested on the open Bible.

"'Come, let us reason together:' your Father loves you; he is knocking at the door of your heart now; 'Come,' he says, 'let us reason together.' Oh! why will you perish when he says through me, 'Come to me, and though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow'?"

She did not say much more, but left, taking the glasses with her. As soon as they were mended, she returned to the house with them. The moment the woman saw her, she exclaimed, holding up both her hands, "I've done with it! I've done with it! Night nor day I have never been able to get that verse out of my head. Not another day of this dreadful life will I lead, if I can help it."

With tears of joy streaming down her face at this wonderful change, Mrs. Vicars ascertained that Mrs. A. had a brother, a respectable man, living at W——. She at once wrote to him, and received in answer that he was willing to do anything he could for his sister; but that knowing what she was, he could not at once take her into his house, till the reality of so wonderful a conversion had been tested. Should she conduct herself well, he would gladly, after a time, share his home with her. It was agreed, therefore, to place her in lodgings at W—— for a time; and at Mrs. Vicars' persuasion, her brother himself came to fetch her; and Mrs. Vicars had the double joy of placing her in safe hands, and seeing one of the worst houses in Brighton shut up, and some of its inmates received into the Home. Mrs. A. is now living with her brother, conducting a small business, having been known for many years as a respectable woman and a most earnest Christian.

Poet's Corner.

PRAYER AT THE CHILDREN'S CHURCH.

"One remarkable feature of the youthful flock cannot be omitted—namely, the faith they have in prayer. This leads them often to request the

conductors to ask God for something in which they are interested."—See *ante*, p. 99.

HARK! I hear their voices
  Rising through the evening air,
Asking God to bless them—
  'Tis the children's prayer.

Ever up and onwards,
  I hear it leap from wave to wave,
Crying, "Lord have mercy on us,
  Thou canst hear, and thou canst save."

Like the baby stream
  Rippling through its native wood,
Now it whispers, now it chatters,
  But 'tis ever pure and good.

So, when washed in Jesus' blood,
  Pure, the prayers of children rise,
As attendant angels bearing
  Fragrant incense through the skies.

Hush! the little hands are claspéd,
  Little heads are bowed in prayer,
Earnest little hearts are pleading—
  Surely God is there.

Mourning o'er their daily weakness,
  Pouring out each sorrow,
Asking God to light the bleakness,
  With a bright and better morrow.

Courage, little ones; pray on,
  For there *is* a God above;
A God of great compassion,
  A God of endless love.

Dark may seem your lot in life,
  Cloudy seem your every day;
But prayer will man you for the strife,
  God will light you on the way.

Lord, teach us all, like children,
  Every want to ask of thee,
Pleading, "Thou, who oft hast given,
  Give, O Lord, to me!"

May 1, 1872. L. G. B.

Teachers' Column.

QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS.

1. Are you—
   Converted, Consecrated, and Consistent?
2. Is your work done—
   Prayerfully, Patiently, and Perseveringly?
3. Are you impelled by—
   The brevity of time, the value of souls, and love to Jesus?
4. Is your work hindered by—
   Pride, love of ease, or want of unity?

If you cannot answer these questions, ask them at the throne of grace.

THE RIGHT CLASS.

THERE is often a feeling in the heart of a teacher, that if he had a better class or a somewhat different position in the work, he could do better. If, by changing, one can secure that to which one is adapted, well. But so long as there is no possibility of change, the present work is providentially yours.

Are you doing your *best* in the place in which Christ has placed you? On weekday and on Sunday are you persistently seeking to draw the hearts of your scholars to you? to win their hearts? to lift them up in thought, in feeling, and in Christian character? above all, to bring them to trust in Christ? Or, are you burying your talent because your class is not interesting?

How blessed a thing it is, under discouragements, to do your duty, not cheered by the hope of success, but simply for Christ's sake!

GOD'S PATIENCE.

A PARABLE.

As Abraham sat one day before the door of his tent in the cool of the evening, he espied a man, bent with age, with hoary locks and snow-white beard. When Abraham saw him he stepped forward and invited the aged stranger to his house, saying, "Enter in, my lord, at the door of thy servant."

The stranger accepted the invitation. Abraham hastened to prepare meat, while Sarah baked bread. When sitting down to meat, the stranger immediately commenced eating. Abraham, astonished, asked, "Dost thou not bless the God of heaven and earth for the food which he giveth thee?"

"Who is the God of heaven and earth," replied the stranger, "that I should bless him? I know him not, nor will I fear him." And taking out an image from his breast he continued—"This is my god, who has fed and clothed me hitherto; him will I fear and none other."

At this, Abraham's anger was kindled. He seized the stranger and cast him out of doors.

When Abraham had entered his room, the Lord called to him, and said, "Abraham."

He replied, "Here I am, thy servant; speak, O Lord."

Jehovah inquired, "Where is the stranger that came under thy roof?"

Abraham replied, "Lord, he would not acknowledge thee, nor bless thy name, nor fear thee. I was therefore jealous for thy name, and cast him out."

But the Lord replied, "Abraham, Abraham, these one hundred and ninety-eight years I have patiently borne with him, and couldst not thou bear with him even for one night?"

Abraham hastened out, brought the stranger back, and related to him how the Lord had reproved him. He was astonished at this, and exclaimed, "So many years has Jehovah borne with me in mercy, and should I not henceforth love and fear him? Instruct thy servant in the fear and knowledge of thy Lord, and thy God shall be my God for ever."

Children's Gallery.

A LITTLE BAZAAR.

Two little girls, belonging to a Sunday School in a large town in the East Riding of Yorkshire, went with their teacher to a juvenile missionary meeting. They were so much impressed with all they heard, and so filled with the desire to do something for the poor heathen, that on reaching home they thought and thought of it. At last they thought they might make some dolls' things, exchange them for fruit, and selling this, give the money to the Missionary Society.

They, however, made so many articles nicely, that one of their parents allowed them the use of a room where they might display their work and sell it, calling it "a little bazaar." The result was, they raised fourteen shillings and sixpence.

The articles were almost entirely what all little girls know the use of, namely, dolls' clothes, pin-cushions, book-marks, &c.

These children were very poor; but they thought they could do something for the glory of God, and the good of their fellow-creatures. Their success was such as may well encourage our little readers to go and do likewise. ELLA.

THE SPANISH MATCH BOY.

A little boy who attends the Madrid Ragged School sells wax matches, called *cerillas*, in the street. But if he does not dispose of a certain number of boxes a day, his parents will not give him anything to eat when he comes home at night.

One afternoon he was very hungry, having had to suffer for a deficit the day before. While thinking what to do, Jesus came into his little mind, and so he got down by his basket, there in the busy *plaza*, and asked *Him* "to help him to sell *four* boxes of wax matches, so that he might have his dinner."

When he arose, a gentlemen stepped up and bought just *four* boxes, and the little match vendor ran home joyfully with his eight farthings, his heart brimming full.

He was asked why he did not stop and try to sell more? "Oh," said he, "I had enough for to-day, and *Jesus* will take care of to-morrow."

Correspondence.

PRAISE MEETINGS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—All who are interested in Ragged Schools—and what Christian philanthropist is not?—must be glad to learn from your leader in the March number that the bulk of the London Ragged Schools statedly hold Prayer Meetings. Lasting spiritual success indeed can never be divorced from prayer; and what "God has thus joined" none can put asunder. For the law of the spiritual harvest is not discovered in mere labour, however energetic or continuous; for we read not—work and ye shall succeed—but rather, "ASK and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." This led an

old writer to say that, "if prayer without work is presumptuous, so work without prayer is practical atheism."

But, Mr. Editor, ought we not to go a step further than thus gathering statedly for prayer—*i.e*, simple *supplication?* For when we think of the quarter of a million of social waifs "saved from the gutter" (see *ante*, p. 6) by means of Ragged Schools, surely we have every reason to praise Him who not only anointed the pioneers, but made their labours to tell so powerfully on the dismal byways of London. Nor is this all; for earnest Ragged School teachers have not been content with seeing the souls committed to their charge only "swept and garnished," but have been impelled to their arduous labours by the example of Him who yearned to see his Father's house furnished with guests. Happily, through the grace of the Holy Spirit, thousands of our poor little friends have not only been saved from lives of sin and shame, but "clothed and in their right minds," they now "sit at the feet of Jesus."

Another subject for praise is the reproductiveness of this work. Thus no less than 306 of our voluntary teachers first found the rest which is in Christ in the very Ragged Schools where they now teach. Some of these having first "won their spurs" as teachers, are now active superintendents of the old school. We need scarcely intimate that as they are model men, they are model managers.

These and similar facts lead to the inference that any Ragged School which is without its PRAISE MEETING omits one of the most pleasing features in our operations. As far as I know, the old school in Brook Street, Euston Road, is the only one that has convened such a gathering. It was largely attended by present and former workers, and the hearts of all were cheered by the many cases of genuine conversion which came under review.

Such Praise Meetings might be held, if not quarterly, at least yearly—the last Sunday evening of the year being most appropriate. To such Praise Meetings converted scholars might be specially invited: and one or two, as representatives of the others, might be invited to engage in this service.

As one fruit of such Praise Meetings, larger blessings would doubtless be vouchsafed by One who ever regards praise as the right sequel to prayer. Let, then, every Ragged School, especially the older and larger ones, convene such a meeting statedly, and as a result, past successes will speedily be found as the gleanings of Ruth when compared with the reapage of Boaz

Yours, &c.,

Q IN THE CORNER.

Facts and Scraps.

CARDIFF INVALIDS' DINNER TABLE.—The *Lancet* says—We have before us the report of a very useful institution in its way—viz., that of a charity at Cardiff, the object of which is to provide sick and sickly men, women, and children of the poorer class with a good meal of meat, vegetables, and bread, to be consumed,

as far as possible, by the recipients dining together at one table. The table is spread at noon on three days in the week all the year round. In addition to a ticket from a subscriber, those dining at the table are required to pay one halfpenny, while twopence is exacted from those who take dinners home. In connection with the Invalids' Dinner Table, there is also a club in which those depositing money are entitled to dinners, to the extent of their deposits, in times of sickness of themselves or their families.

During the year 1871, 110 invalids have been relieved, the number of dinners given being 700, as compared with 401 in the previous year. Of the need and value of such an institution in the case of the sick poor, whose recovery from illness is so often retarded in their convalescence for want of timely administration of nutritious animal food, there can be no reasonable doubt.

CLASSIFICATION OF CRIME.—From the "Return of the trade or occupation of the persons taken into custody during the year 1871" by the metropolitan police some suggestive figures may be extracted. Among the culprits there were, for simple larceny, 105 shoemakers, 100 sailors, 95 painters, 84 carpenters, 69 smiths, 60 tailors, 49 bricklayers, 44 soldiers, and 7 butchers; for common assaults, 164 sailors, 140 shoemakers, 129 tailors, 127 carpenters, 120 bricklayers, 113 smiths, 102 painters, 35 butchers, and 37 soldiers; for being drunk, or drunk and disorderly, 337 carpenters, 333 tailors, 300 sailors, 286 painters, 250 shoemakers, 178 bricklayers, 177 smiths, 95 butchers, and 16 soldiers.

Notices of Meetings.

BRIDGE STREET, WEST GREENWICH.

The annual meeting of this school was recently held at Alexandra Hall, Blackheath. Martin Ware, jun., Esq., presided.

The Report which was read by Mr. H. C. Pierson, the hon. sec., said that the Committee are very desirous of confining the benefits of these schools, the admission to which is entirely free, to the really poor; and with this object in view, they have appointed a sub-committee, who meet every Wednesday morning, to select the most eligible cases out of the numerous applications for admission. Many of the children who have attended the school now for some time have greatly improved, and the Committee would gladly pass them on to other schools, but for the obstacle that, for the most part, the parents are too poor to pay for them. To turn the children out of their school under these circumstances would be wrong, not only undoing the work which had been accomplished, but cruel. The only alternative left them, therefore, is to allow the children to remain until they obtain situations. During the past year twenty-six have gone to places, and at the meeting held on the 23rd of March last, six obtained prizes from Lord Shaftesbury, for having kept their situations for more than twelve months without change. The numbers are:—On the books, girls, 45; boys, 80; infants, 150; total, 275. Average attendance: Girls, 35; boys, 75; infants, 130; total, 240. In November last, the schools were examined by her Majesty's Inspector, and reported to be in a very satisfactory state of "efficiency" as to the building, ventilation, drainage, furniture, the master, and mistress; and simple elementary teaching in reading, writing, and spelling, whilst arithmetic was said to be weak, on account of an insufficient knowledge of notation. These schools are therefore considered by the London

School Board to be efficient, and as such capable of receiving 241 children. The Sewing Class continues in a very healthy state, and the Committee would be thankful for plain needlework and mending for the employment of the children. The Infant School is a very interesting part of the institution, and was very highly spoken of by her Majesty's Inspector, who declared it to be a "bonny sight." Its removal to the upper floor has been a great improvement, both for the mistress and children, the attendance of which is 130 daily, as before stated. The Sunday School, which is held in the afternoon, continues in excellent order; it is attended by eleven voluntary teachers, who are very regular. The average number of children has been ninety-five. Since the last annual meeting, the suggestion then thrown out by Mr. Hytche of having children's services, has been adopted with great success by Mr. Joseph Jordon and his brother, assisted by Mr. and Mrs. Harper, on Sunday and Thursday evenings. As many as 159 have attended on Sunday, and 68 on Thursday evenings. The Night School is attended by older lads, who get work during the daytime. In the winter the numbers fall off to about fifteen, but they have increased to an average of twenty-eight. Kind friends continue to hold Mothers' Meetings once a week, which are attended by thirty or forty. The Bible Class has also been held once a week by their president, Lieutenant-Colonel Brooke.

The receipts were £203 18s. 3d.; the expenses, £188 8s.

GRAY'S YARD, MARYLEBONE.

The annual meeting was recently held; G. Hanbury, Esq., presided.

The Report stated that the majority of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood of Davies Mews strongly objected to the work carried on by the Committee, and succeeded in preventing the retention of the premises they occupied. At that time the Committee of the Gray's Yard Day and Sunday Ragged Schools were building a new house for their accommodation. It was suggested by a friend that the two schools should combine their philanthropic efforts, and negotiations were opened. Two houses were taken instead of one, and converted into one large school and other necessary offices. It was decided that the Gray's Yard Committee should take the management of the whole Day School work, and a lease of the entire premises, while the Committee from Davies Mews should take the management of the whole of the Sunday School work. A Children's Church is held every Sunday morning. During the year 1,444 children attended. Since the removal to Gray's Yard the average has risen to 78. At the Ragged Church as many as 600 have been present at one service. The Sunday Afternoon School has an average of 187; teachers, 15. A Sunday Evening School for girls, boys, and infants, is held. Average attendance, 230; teachers, 20. The Elder Girls' Bible Class is held every Sunday afternoon and evening. Evening attendance from 15 to 22, and in the afternoon rather less. The Elder Boys' Bible Class is held every Sunday afternoon and evening. The attendance is about 40. The Penny Bank is well appreciated by the children; the deposits during the year amounting to £98 5s. 10¾d. Total number of deposits, 2,217. A Band of Hope meeting is held on the third Tuesday in every month. Attendance, 40 to 60. Since the commencement in June 1853, 2,035 children have been enrolled. A class for girls under ten years of age is conducted by several lady teachers every Monday evening during the winter months. There is an attendance of about 30.

The meeting was addressed by Rev. W. Cadman, E. W. Moore, W. Gill; Dr. Habershon, and Messrs. E. J. Hytche and J. Richardson.

Papers, Original and Selected.

RAGGED CHURCHES.

It is a painful fact that not one-third of our mechanics attend any place of worship on the Lord's-day. This, however, does not arise through any lack of space in our public sanctuaries, for at least one-third more could be readily accommodated were there the disposition to comply with the Divine injunction, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together." Nor does it arise from that avowed infidelity which scorns to bow to that which it does not believe. It is then indifference, rather than positive Deism, which causes the bulk of the artisan class to abstain from public worship. Most, in fact, care too little for the subject to listen to the scurrility of a Bradlaugh or to the veiled and therefore the more entrapping infidelity of a Bishop Colenso.

Happily, many working men are still loyal to the Christian creed. They form the cream of our open-air preachers and tract distributors; and, were skilled mechanics eliminated from Sunday or Ragged Schools, those admirable home missions would soon have to close their doors. Rough many of them may be in manners or exterior, yet they do a work among our social outcasts such as those who have been called "kid-glove religionists" could never effect.

Some time ago a meeting of working men was convened in Camden Town in order to learn why they, as a class, were "conspicuous by their absence" from public worship. Their excuses were varied, but there was no reason to believe, however invalid, that those who spoke did not express the real feelings of their class on this momentous subject. The following were some of the reasons assigned, and we give them because no remedy can be applied if the seat of the disease is not discovered. For example: Number 1. I like to walk out on Sundays to see the works of the Creator. 2. The church is hot and close, and I like to get into the fresh air. 3. The world is God's house. I can worship God anywhere. 4. What's the use of going to listen to a man reading a discourse? I could do that as well as him. 5. I can read and pray at home quite as well as at church. 6. I work hard all the

week. Sunday is the only day I can be with my family. 7. Sunday is the only day I've got to attend to my garden. 8. I mend my children's shoes on Sundays. 9. I go to see my daughter, who is in service, on Sundays. 10. The sermons are dull, and the ministers want talent. 11. On Sunday mornings I attend to my private business; in the afternoon and evenings I rest. 12. I want to read the newspaper on Sundays. 13. I wouldn't go to be a hypocrite. 14. If I go I cannot have my pipe, which I enjoy after a week's work. 15. My dress is not good enough to go in. 16. They preach, but very few of them practise. 17. When I've got the will to go, I'll go. 18. Going to church won't carry me to heaven. 19. It's all done to frighten the people, and to keep them down. 20. I had enough of religion and imprisonment at the Sunday School.

The same disinclination is found when we descend a step lower in the social scale. Thus, in ascertaining the cause of their non-attendance at public worship, a City Missionary who visited the navvies employed on the Thames Embankment recorded these quaint reasons :—

"*E.* said to me, 'No, I won't go to church or chapel; don't suit me, or the likes o' me; got no toggery fit to go in among big fellows. If they saw me inside in this trim, they'd sneeze at me in a jiffy.' *F.* 'Right you are, mate. You'd be snubbed, sure enough, if you appeared in your blouse and jerry among them chaps that go to church to be in the fashion.' *G.* 'No, I won't go to them churches and places. Let me see, how long must it be?—oh, it's a long time! some years, as I reckon on, since I must 'a been on the inside of a church; and then it was to get spliced to my wench.' *H.* 'No, my toggery is too shaky to go in among well-dressed folks. So I goes for a blow in the New Cut.' Then came in quick succession from all sides such remarks as—'Yes, a chap would be sneezed at.' 'He'd be stuffed into a corner.' 'That old dame of a pew-opener would keep you out of a seat, if you didn't tip her a tanner.' 'The parson, too, reads his preaching. I don't want his reading. I can read a bit as well as he, p'raps. Now, answer me this: if reading a sermon is preaching it, is not reading a newspaper preaching what it speaks about?'"

But there is a class so low in the social scale that those above referred to may be regarded as the aristocracy of manual labour. They are rarely seen by daylight, and then one, or at most two, shamble through our byways, avoiding as much as possible the

more public thoroughfares. Every one regards them with surprise, if not with horror. Yet thousands of these herd together in casual wards, in the licensed lodging-houses of the Mint, or in the still lower *un*licensed "hot-water houses" of Golden Lane. Some of these never had a chance in their lives. The children of "nobody," they never knew a mother's smile, or felt a father's caress. Aimless in life, they have but one desire, akin to that of the animal creation, namely, how to find their daily bread without working for it, and where to sleep at night. Many of these are semi-idiots; or, if not, the brain has never been properly exercised, and at last, dying of premature old age, they depart with few remembrances of human kindness, not knowing the great truth that Christ died for the salvation of all, be he prince or beggar.

Now, reader, fancy, if you can, one hundred of such persons entering, we will not say a ritualistic Belgravian church, but any ordinary church or chapel! What a panic would be excited in pulpit and pew, and how soon the building would be left to their sole tenancy! Yet their souls are of equal value to that of Dives, and it may be—nay, we *know* it to be a fact—that amongst them is to be found many a modern Lazarus who, in the ages to come, will find an eternal resting-place in Abraham's bosom.

We have indicated what a panic would be created by the entrance of these miserably-clad and still more spiritually wretched creatures into our ordinary places of worship. Yet we have seen above a thousand of these gathered into one Ragged Church Sunday after Sunday, and no congregation could display greater outward reverence, and in few did the Holy Spirit work with more visible power.

It is, indeed, for our social pariahs that "Ragged Churches" were founded above twenty years ago. The bulk are conducted in Ragged School buildings; some by men of enlarged experience, and no mean mental capacity; others by those whose deep piety and earnestness of character make up for their intellectual deficiencies. Of these, 74 are now conducted in Ragged Schools, with a united attendance of 5,513. Of these, 33 are aided by our valuable sister society, the "Ragged Church Union," which has, in addition, 41 other preaching stations, mostly planted amidst the very dens of London. In these London Ragged Churches, it is believed that above 10,000 persons of the lowest social strata listen to the pure gospel every Lord's-day.

The oldest Ragged Church, that held in Field Lane, completed twenty years of unceasing service last May. During that period the aggregate congregation was 301,896. From the way in which, like most Ragged Churches, the elements varied, it is believed that no less than 100,000 persons heard that Gospel which is "the power of God unto salvation to every one who believeth."

Most Ragged Churches are only open on Sunday evening; but four of the largest—namely, Field Lane, Gray's Yard, King Edward Street, and Brewer's Court—hold their services on Lord's-day morning as well as in the evening. At these four there is an aggregate attendance of about 1,200 adults. As the bulk of these four congregations are either casuals, mendicants, thieves, broken-down gentlemen, or half-starved men and women, a lump of bread is given at the *close* of the service. It is a painful sight to notice how this bread is seized by too many, and how they devour it more like famished wolves than human beings. In giving this dole, the conductors feel that, after all, they only imitate the example of their Divine Master, who said after he had preached to a somewhat similar congregation, "If I send them away fasting, they will faint by the way!"

Nearly every Ragged Church includes the same strange elements. At one, ex-acrobats, a wood hawker, and an old gutter-raker, French Communists, Italian lazzaroni, and German pantheists are attracted. At another, a crossing-sweeper, a beggar, and three "sandwich" men are usually present. Another reports that thirteen blind men regularly attend, of the conversion of six of whom there is no shadow of doubt. Two of these unique congregations consists mainly of canal boatmen and their wives, and of women employed in dustyards. At one we have seen several gipsies rapt in devotion. Scene-shifters, keepers of fences and dolly-shops, nigger melodists, ticket-of-leave men, and casuals, form the staple of many of these strangest of strange flocks. But, alas! in addition to broken-down tradesmen, it is not rare to find in the largest of these congregations ruined clergymen and ministers, lawyers, doctors, and military or naval officers, all of whom had "spent their substance in riotous living," and thus had, as a sequel to their miserable career, to herd with the dregs of society.

Nor has this work been without striking spiritual results. When, indeed, was the simple gospel ever unaccompanied by rich fruitage? Many backsliders have been reclaimed, and many

drunkards restored; and not a few thieves or harlots are now living virtuously and winning their bread honestly; and, what is still better, they are now "sitting at the feet of Jesus clothed and in their right mind." On one occasion recently, one of these preachers met no less than sixty-eight persons, all of whom had either given their hearts to Jesus, or professed to be under strong religious convictions: some of these are "burning and shining lights" in the alleys where poverty compels them still to live. Nor is it rare for fifty or sixty men and women to stay to speak on spiritual matters to the preachers at the conclusion of the service.

Our space will not permit the narration of many cases of temporal or spiritual good, but three striking cases which recently came under our own notice at Field Lane will fitly close this sketch of our Ragged Churches:—

1. S. T., aged thirty-eight, was a chemist in business for himself, but was brought down through severe losses owing to railway improvements. Step by step he came down from affluence to abject beggary. He had been living a life of poverty and misery. "What shall I do?" he asked himself. "How long shall I spin out this miserable existence? Far better for me to bury myself in the bottom of the Thames: I shall then endure no longer this hell upon earth." Just at this time he was directed to the Ragged Church. The Lord blessed the truth spoken that morning, and he was saved from the sin of suicide. He told his tale of sorrow faithfully. Strong drink, to which he had resorted, had ruined his body, and by it he had almost lost his soul. On an appeal, his friends "came to the rescue" A situation was procured for him; but it was too late, for in four short months he was called before the bar of God, but not without leaving a testimony behind him that he had become a child of God. It was almost with his expiring words that he desired his sister to convey to all those who ever had spoken to him of Christ's love his deep value of their services, and said that he had been as a brand from the burning through their instrumentality. His death, the sister adds, was calm and peaceful; he died trusting in Jesus as the sole ground of his confidence, and with a certain hope of a glorious immortality.

2. C. J., aged thirty, was known for nearly twelve years as a dangerous man. For thirteen years he had never done any work save what he did in the "government houses," as he expressed it, meaning thereby prisons or casual wards. During those thirteen

years, he was in prison twenty times—at least seven years in the total; the remaining time was spent either in casual wards, arches, or among ruins. When not in prison he regularly attended this Ragged Church, and so was constantly under reproof. Having been missed for more than eighteen months, it was concluded that he was in prison for rather a longer period than usual. But one day he was met in the Farringdon Road, when he told a long story of his wicked career, and how the Lord had changed his heart. He had held one situation over thirteen months, and had borne a good character during that time. Shortly before he obtained that situation, he was much impressed one Sunday morning by the prayer and address; but more especially by the prayer, which seemed cut and clipped entirely to meet his special case. He felt certain that the Lord answered prayer that morning, for ever since the Lord had prospered him, and given him another spirit. He prayed daily for more grace, to enable him to continue in the Christian course, looking and trusting to Jesus as his only hope.

3. The following—one out of many letters received from former members of this congregation—tells its own tale too well to require any comment:—

"DEAR SIR,—I am reminded of one of the precepts written on the wall of your chapel, immediately opposite the entrance, and which from first seeing, has always had a lasting impression upon my mind, viz., 'In all thy ways acknowledge God, and he will direct thy paths.' I shall never forget this as long as I live; for, cast down as I was, almost despairing and quite destitute in every sense of the word, I applied for admission to your Refuge. Upon producing my testimonials I was admitted. You cannot possibly imagine my thankfulness for getting in even for one night's shelter. I had the night previously walked the streets of London, and for days, when not cleaning for the institute, had not a taste of any kind of food, except that supplied night and morning at the Refuge. I could not make my circumstances known to any in London, for I felt persuaded they would not acknowledge me in adversity. Therefore when I tell you that I now hold the position of head clerk to the clerk to justices here (with Lord F— as chairman), and am looked up to and respected and enjoying all the comforts of this life in a reasonable way, I think I have reason to say, 'In all thy ways acknowledge God, and he will direct thy paths.' I write to show you that *I* have, at least (if no others) been benefited

by your institution, and shall always proudly feel my obligations to it, but which I cannot express. Make use of this any way you may think proper. I remain, yours faithfully,

"W. K. K."

Need we say, then, that we should be glad to see similar services conducted in every Ragged School, not assuredly to supplant, but as supplemental to, our Sunday Night Schools. Having watched the experiment from the outset, we consider that it would be sinful not to testify that no evangelistic work has been more richly productive. Hundreds of thousands at least, humanly speaking, would never have learnt the great truth that Jesus is the sole key to heaven had it not been for Ragged Churches. Our prayer, then, is that the Holy Spirit, who alone can anoint either preacher or flock, will thrust many labourers fully equipped for the work into this branch of service, for the harvest only waits for the reapers. Then, we doubt not, the ancient promise will be literally fulfilled (Isa. xxix. 19), "the *poor* among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel."

POETRY OF RAGGED SCHOOLS,

BY M. A. PAULL (AUTHOR OF "TIM'S TROUBLES," "MY PARISH," "THE DIVER'S DAUGHTER," &c.).

No one doubts who has ever worked, or been witness to the labours of others, in Ragged Schools, that there is an immense deal of prose about them, and very ugly prose too. But any one who enjoyed, as we did last month, the grand holiday outing of the Plymouth Ragged Schools on the breezy down that lies between this busy seaport and Tavistock of ancient renown, could never again deny the existence of a large amount of poetry also.

Most people—indeed, we think all people who are worth anything—have at least a certain amount of love for children; and the higher, the purer the character, the greater, as a rule, will be that love. Our Master, Christ, he whom we desire to imitate, he who was the incorporation of all wisdom, sympathised most perfectly of any man who ever lived with the simplicity of little children. Those who seek to give to childhood, and especially to our lowest and most degraded children, innocent, happy pleasures, as well as honest, sound instruction, are amongst the greatest benefactors of our race.

To the president of our Ragged Schools, E. R. Brown, Esq., who has for years, in no empty sense, been a father to thousands of poor, and too often otherwise neglected children, their holiday must have been one sweet song of thankful happiness—a page of poesy written in letters of gold. For

the day was so lovely, spite of a few showers in the morning, the children so well behaved, the country so fair, the amusements so innocent, the hundreds of young faces so full of mirth, that every hour only added a fresh verse to the beautiful poem.

The noontide of this 26th of June saw assembled at the two Ragged Schools, situated at opposite ends of our town, not less than a thousand children and young people belonging to the Sunday, and Day, and Night Schools. All honour to the knot of zealous educationists in Plymouth, who so long before a national plan of education became an achieved fact, put their shoulders to the wheel to "move on" ragged, untaught, untrained children into the pure atmosphere of intelligent Christianity.

A procession is soon after formed from each school to the railway station, whence a special train will convey them to the moorland before alluded to. On they troop, eager faces, eager voices; little ones, not long out of arms, some; young men and women others; but all intensely satisfied, intensely delighted to be off, and all of them with bright, smiling faces, most of them clean and tidy in appearance. For, days before, efforts have been begun in many and many a home to make a somewhat smart appearance on this festal day. Mothers' and sisters' hands have been busy retrimming the faded hat, mending the shabby trousers, or washing the soiled garments. There is the poetry of work done for affection's sake in all these things, and "love's labour" (Shakespeare's authority to the contrary notwithstanding) is NEVER LOST.

Fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers, as well as the remoter relations of the children, together with the ordinary pedestrians, watch the procession as it passes with expressions of kind sympathy, many of them with thankful, swelling hearts that these young ones are thus cared for.

Helter-skelter, topsy-turvy, how these children swarmed the station, inundated the platform, and stormed the carriages. No wonder the officials looked somewhat gravely and sternly at these exuberant boys and girls, so regardless of decorum in their intense glee. How they did chatter, and sing, and shout, and cheer, and hurrah! What a pushing and shrieking of the girls that Jane, and Nancy, and Polly, and their chosen friends, might all ride in the same compartment! What a rushing, and shouting, and yelling of the boys to be foremost in their places! Monkeys and cockatoos in full chorus might have made nearly as much noise, nothing else could have done it.

And now we are off; the two prosaic engines, looking black and business-like as ever, though it is so emphatically a holiday trip, pull off the heavy train, and the singing and shouting are only increased by the joy of motion and the progress made towards the desired spot; whilst the waving of handkerchiefs to the less-favoured children of Plymouth who are *not* Ragged School children, and therefore must stay at home, is evidently considered expressive and the proper thing.

Past water and wood, past meadows and flowers, past hayfields and cattle, all of them calling forth fresh bursts of approval, we come at last, after passing through two stations and as many tunnels, in which the shouting and screaming are something louder than before, to Horrabridge station,

which is close to Roborough Down, up which there is soon an eager ascent of hundreds of pairs of young active feet, delighted to feel the soft springy turf beneath them, a wide expanse of God's beautiful sky arching above them, and at but a little distance a long range of the fine Dartmoor hills—forming a most lovely panoramic view with the lights and shadows of the half-sunny, half-cloudy day ever changing the grand and noble prospect. Now there is revealed a sun-lit landscape, beautiful with the emerald luxuriance of the corn, and with the long, yellower green of the grass that is ready for the mower, and anon all is hidden and darkened by the heavy clouds above.

A fresh, invigorating, appetite-creating breeze blew over the down the whole afternoon and evening, by which only can we account for the disappearance of the huge cakes dispensed at half-past four, and the readiness to taste the good qualities of those large buns, half-a-pound in weight, which were bestowed as the children were ready to march off the ground some three hours later. It was a pretty sight to see the flower-adorned hats and caps of the various groups of boys and girls, who, seated on the down in rows, were waited on at their substantial meal by various energetic friends, and teachers, and efficient assistants.

Many of the quietly disposed wandered off seeking flowers and listening to the jubilant larks that every year make Roborough Down musical with song; others chased with unwearied zeal the footballs provided for their amusement. Some ran races, some played cricket, and all sorts of juvenile games of the "oranges and lemons" type were very much in vogue. Some enterprising caterers for the children had brought out a large swing boat, in which the fortunate possessors of a halfpenny had a continuous seesaw for some minutes' duration, that was eminently calculated to produce feelings analogous to those experienced by many on the briny deep. Donkeys and a pony were "requisitioned" and largely patronised by the more wealthy or extravagant of the children who had saved up their occasional halfpence for some time in anticipation of this day.

The singing of the children was very sweet. No sooner had they all mustered on the down, after emerging from the train, than the two schools gathered in separate groups, and sang, under the direction of their respective masters, a number of hymns and pieces, which elicited much praise, and deservedly, by the tasteful manner in which they were rendered. And no sooner had they come to the place of rendezvous, where a nice tent was ready to accommodate the visitors, while a smaller one contained stores of eatables, &c., than there was a shower of golden fruit, as from some moorland garden of Hesperides, and one hand of every great and little child was seen to contain an orange. Of the quality of those oranges we heard unbounded approval on every hand, and after numerous extempore games of ball with the bright little globes, they were eaten with intense satisfaction. After tea there was more play, then more singing, ending by the National Anthem, and then uprose hearty cheers for Mr. Brown, for visitors, and the teachers, in the noisy exuberance of grateful joy. The sun was going down in golden yet cloudy glory, and shedding a warm mellow light over the hills opposite, as the thousand children were called together and

rearranged in couples and trios, and then, buns in hand, all started for the short walk over the down to the station.

Another scramble into the carriages, amidst an admiring throng of spectators from the village, who take a kindly interest in these young folks; another ride homewards, as pleasant and as free from all misadventure as possible, and just as noisy as the outcoming, for the children seem to have added to and not lost their spirits by the pure bath of fresh air their lungs have received, and Plymouth is once more reached, and out swarm upon the platform the happy throng.

Mothers, and fathers, and grandmothers, hover about the station, and the meetings are very noisy and happy; they are greeted with intense delight, to be entertained with every particular of the day's doings, and in many instances to receive a "taste" of the excellent buns, that were certainly more than large enough for most of the children. Some go trooping along homewards singing hymns, some are chattering to their parents, some are gaily talking to young companions of their adventures, and all—unless we except the one or two discontented natures that are never satisfied with anything, and are to be found everywhere—are agreed that the Plymouth Ragged Schools never had a nicer excursion.

Back to prose to-day, back to scrubbing rooms, as the little hard-worked maid-of-all-work, or to minding baby for mother; or to running errands as shop-boy, or to daily toil in factory or fishing-boat; or to carry heavily-laden baskets from the market, or hawk fish and fruit through the streets; back to the various employments of everyday life: but the poetry of this day in the sweet country is not yet out of these children's hearts, and in some of them *never* will be.

There are fair pictures of sky and earth written on those young brains, sweet music of bird voices that shall echo and re-echo through those young lives, and perchance give a brighter colouring to their best and highest aspirations. Every new experience gained in natural objects makes it easier to understand the language of the Bible. "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so is the Lord round about his people from henceforth, even for ever," and the text, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills," have a fuller signification for these children who have been near those beautiful Dartmoor hills, than they could possibly have for those who never have seen high ground at all. There were several old scholars of the older established Ragged Schools on Roborough Down yesterday, some of them married, and in one or more instances both husband and wife had been pupils at the school, and the husbands are still connected with it as teachers, while others were from a distance occupying respectable situations. Such instances as these, such blessed fruits of labour, form the poetry of life-work, and must be especially delightful reading to the honoured and beloved master who has for so many years patiently and hopefully sown "beside all waters."

But for the Ragged School many a worthy useful citizen would have been lost to society, and without the means, which many a child has been glad to use, of elevating himself in the social scale from the depths of degradation to which the drunkenness or dissipation of his parents had reduced him. Whatever instruction may henceforth be given to such children, we

cannot but believe that they have received in the Ragged Schools precisely the plain, high-principled, loving teaching that is calculated to raise their standard of feeling and to meet their special needs. For the Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Christ, the broad principles of Divine charity—form the roots whence this education has ever grown.

LIVERPOOL RAGGED SCHOOLS.

It is about twenty-six years since Ragged Schools were planted in Liverpool. In addition to the ordinary tenants of the "slums" of large cities, it has a large Irish colony steeped to its lips in poverty, and always ready for riot; and whose religion, if religion it can be called, consists solely in doing what the Priesthood bids, be it right or wrong. Our Ratcliffe Highway, too, with its drunken sailors, and flaunting, brazen, unsexed women, is reproduced on the banks of the Mersey. Hence we cannot conceive of any place with its half-million of souls which more requires that religious and social mission work so successfully carried on by Ragged Schools wherever planted.

It is scarcely needful to say that Ragged Schools have been very successful in Liverpool, whether we view them in their social or in their evangelistic aspects. This is mainly due to the Liverpool Ragged School Union. Founded above twenty-four years ago, its rules and its modes of working are based on those so wisely adopted in London. There, as here, the Bible is the foundation of all teaching; for the managers do *not* believe in the modern heresy that it only requires a knowledge of the "rule of three" for outcast or destitute children to become good citizens.

The following summary, while it represents the different kinds of Ragged Schools in Liverpool, shows how wide are their operations, and how large is the population embraced.

Schools.	Attendance.	Able to Read.	Gone to other Schools.	Gone to Situations.	Teachers.
19 Evening Schools	2207	1770	101	88	192
25 Sabbath ,, ...	3652	1831	—	90	315
13 Day ,, ...	2196	945	128	83	38
4 Industrial ,, ...	660	474	—	95	14
	8715	5020	229	356	559

Not restricted to secular or religious work, important Industrial Schools are maintained in full efficiency. The original Industrial School at Everton Terrace has 200 children who are housed and fed, and also 100 day scholars. The Kirkdale Road Schools have nearly 200 children, to whom the institution is a home. There are also 400 day scholars, the greater part of whom receive a warm dinner daily; an Evening School with 250 children on the roll; and a Sunday School numbering 150. A Girls' Industrial School in Toxteth Park has now occupied for more than twelve months the beautiful premises erected in Dingle Lane, at the expense of J. J. Rowe, Esq.

The number of children has lately been increased from 30 to 40, and will be raised to 60 if the Committee (who receive no Government aid) procure increased subscriptions. The young girls, who are taken from the most destitute class, are educated and trained solely as domestic servants, and thereby a great public want is met. The Holy Trinity Ragged and Industrial Schools have, in the short space of three years, attained a magnitude which speaks volumes for the exertions of the Committee. Above 300 children attend the Day Schools, and receive a warm dinner daily. Above 200 children attend the Sabbath Scoool. The buildings, which now accommodate 85 otherwise homeless children, will shortly be extended so as to increase the number to 200.

Including the dinners given on school-days in the Industrial Schools, the total number of dinners per week given in these Ragged Schools is above 8,600. In some schools, as in the London Ragged Schools, they are given once a week, in others twice, and in many daily. These dinners are in very numerous cases the only really wholesome, nutritious meal which the poor children receive. They have not only an important influence on their health, but also on their attendance at school. Through the liberality of a member of the committee, the children of a Night School receive a supply of bread on school nights. By the kindness of another, the superintendent was able during winter to provide a substantial tea for between 700 and 800 of the parents of the children, and of other poor in different quarters of the town—when the opportunity was taken to give practical addresses on their most vital interests.

Their general superintendent last winter commenced a series of Sunday Evening Services for children in the Ragged School, York Street. Prayer, praise, and a short evangelistic address, suited to the capacities of the children, form a service of an hour's duration. This service is much appreciated, and the attendance of children averages upwards of 100. This example has been followed in five other localities, and altogether there is now an attendance of about 500 children at these Children's Churches. May they so grow that every Ragged School in Liverpool will regard its machinery as incomplete without its Children's Church!

The action of the Liverpool School Board, whilst producing a considerable effect in improved attendance at the public Elementary Schools, cannot as yet be said to have produced much effect on the lowest strata of society, whence Ragged School children are, or ought to be, solely drawn. The great problem to be solved is, how the Education Act can meet the case of the Ragged School. Where parents are so depraved as to be utterly neglectful of any of their duties, or when the poor children are left as orphans to wander the streets, the Ragged School supplies, in many cases a home, in others a meal, and, in all, the blessings of religious education. If this education is inferior in secular things to the more regular training required by the Government in Elementary Schools, it may be safely said that the religious instruction of the Ragged Schools (in most cases given by teachers whom the love of Christ has constrained to the work) is their most important element. It has been, by God's blessing, the means of saving hundreds of poor wandering Arabs in Liverpool for time and for eternity.

Our prayer is that our sister society, the Liverpool Ragged School Union, may increasingly prosper in its great work, and be the means of saving thousands more, body and soul, of the poor waifs and strays of that great commercial centre.

SCHOOL AGENT'S WORK.—No. II. NORTH AND EAST.

From Mr. Curtis's Twelfth Annual Report we make the following extracts, as showing the state of the Ragged Schools in North and East London.

During the past year I paid the following

VISITS.

To Sunday Schools	120
„ Day Schools	573
„ Evening Schools	303
„ Special Business and Conferences	36
„ Public and Social Meetings	20
„ Parents' Meetings	8
„ Committee Meetings	4
Total	1064

Besides which a large correspondence has been conducted with the Local Committees.

During the year sundry extensions have taken place, mostly of a missionary character. They are as follows:—Pell Street, Children's Service; Bluegate Fields, Sunday Morning Service; Salmon's Lane, Children's Service, Week Evening School for Girls, and Mission Services on week days; East India Road, Adults' Service; Cranbrook Street, Week Evening Service and Class for Girls; Vinegar Ground and Hammond Square, Drum and Fife Band; Lamb Court, Juvenile Band for Tract Distribution, Open Air Services, Christian Associations—one for girls and one for boys, extra Sewing Class, and extra Mothers' Meeting; Sermon Lane, Sunday Evening Service and Girls' Evening School; Rochester Mews, Sunday Evening, Week Evening, and Open Air Services; George Yard, One Male and One Female Visitor, and a Swimming Class; Great Queen Street, Newsboys' Home; Homerton, Adult Bible Class; Haggerston, Week Evening School by paid master; Hope Street, Band of Hope; and Rufford's Buildings, Sunday Band.

During the year a large and well-built school has been erected at Kingsland. Salmon Lane has converted some adjoining houses, by which accomodation has been provided for some hundred and fifty extra children. Chequer Alley has taken a public-house which for a long time was a sore plague to them, and intend converting it to mission purposes. Northey Street has erected a gallery, which is divided into two class-rooms. Brackley Street has erected a separate room for infants. Lamb Court has rented a large house and hall, and Rochester Mews has hired adjoining premises for mission purposes.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

The number of school buildings is ninety-six, forty-five of which are in the east and fifty-one in the north of London.

There are thirty-nine Morning Schools, with an attendance of about 3,000 children; sixty-eight Afternoon Schools, at which on an average about 9,200 attend; and fifty-four Evening Schools, with an attendance of 9,000.

Total number of voluntary teachers, 1,900; average attendance, near 1,300.

The prevalence of smallpox in certain districts affected the attendance of teachers and scholars. Several teachers caught it: all have recovered, and bear now no trace of the disease.

Kingsland, over whom a cloud hung for several years—driven from post to pillar, and settling down for short periods in makeshifts—has now a new building of ample dimensions, into which a large number of children are gathered. The teachers feel that they have a permanent home, and have no fear of sanitary inspectors before their eyes.

Somers Town is an evidence that a school planted in the centre of a thick and poor population, with an able superintendent and enthusiastic teachers, may have scholars in abundance. A year or two ago it was held in Agar Town (which has been almost totally destroyed for railway purposes). The attendance has more than doubled—nearly 400 children are present on Sunday evenings.

Lamb and Flag Schools have amalgamated with the schools in Red Lion Street hard by, to which there is an entrance without going into the street. The attendance during the entire day is about 700 children. This institution is in a state of spiritual activity, not only on the Sabbath but during the week. On Sunday morning there are two Children's Services, in the afternoon and evening there are Schools, Bible Classes, and Adult Services, which fill the place with bright and beautiful life.

Hope Place, Stepney, is a great spiritual force operating in a very crowded district. Some 800 young persons are collected here on Sunday evenings in the rooms of two houses and in one good-sized hall. The services and teachings are anything but sleepy. Spiritual songs to lively tunes sung with enthusiasm, succeeded by telling addresses, keep every eye as fresh in warm and crowded rooms as if the gathering was on a breezy common. At my last visit I was much struck with the order and attention of the children, but the explanation was at hand; here was life in earnest: one teacher with a class of girls held them perfectly spell-bound while she related some touching incident in the spiritual career of a little child.

Hartshorn Court goes on its untiring way; its Sunday School and Bible Classes in the afternoon, and its Children's Service in the evening. This latter operation is conducted in a very poorly lit building; the gas is not laid on, and hence there is a dim but certainly not a religious light shed over occasionally a stormy gathering. The noise is usually during the singing, for during the prayer the meeting is hushed, and order usually prevails during the address.

Hatfield Street has a large influx of the rough element on Sunday evenings, and usually manages to limit its numbers to the teaching power present, the superintendent keeping them fairly in hand. On one of my visits, how-

ever, the superintendent was away, and a finer example of Bedlam broke loose was never witnessed; forms over and groups on the floor, with flying missiles and other vagaries, kept numbers of them in a roar of laughter. Such a blaze of fun it was found impossible to extinguish, so the school was dismissed, the teachers feeling chagrined and deeply humiliated at their want of power to control their youthful charge.

Little Camden Street is deficient in teaching power on Sunday evenings. A crowd of boys usually wait outside, a portion of which is let in as teachers arrive. On my last visit the whole of them were let in, and I certainly never addressed a more attentive school. After the address, signs of impatience were manifest, which the teachers could not repress. The superintendent never has recourse to blows, hence there is no revenge or spiteful mischief, and they are not assailed by missiles from without. In order to increase the staff of teachers, I wrote previous to the last Sunday in the year to the Rev. C. Harrison, of Camden Town. The result has not yet reached me.

East India Road has sustained a great loss by the unavoidable retirement of Mr. and Mrs. Parker. Efforts have been made to supply the loss. There is promise of the work being sustained to the level of its former efficiency. The teachers and some members of the committee showed their esteem of Mr. and Mrs. Parker for their long and faithful service (some fifteen years) by presenting them with a writing desk and workbox combined.

Castle Street, Long Acre, with its able staff of educated Christian gentlemen, has done very much to elevate and vitalise with religious truth a number of boys who, but for them, would have been in the grasp of the destroyer.

Albert Street is entitled to hearty mention on account of the self-denying labours of Messrs. Bellamy and Montague, two able superintendents, and their earnest coadjutors, the teachers. One or both superintendents were formerly scholars.

Elder Walk declined during some part of the year through loss of the superintendent and some able teachers, but has recovered itself and promises in its new building considerably to enlarge its dimensions.

Homerton, by the addition of a class-room, has provided accommodation for elder lads, who attend in goodly numbers.

Salmon Lane, since its connection with Hope Place, has had a quickening. The school was a healthy and useful operation to a most select class of very rough boys and girls. The accommodation was limited, and the attendance necessarily very small. By the taking of adjoining houses, and sundry alterations for light and ventilation, and increased space, provision has been made for a goodly number. The attendance has reached to three hundred, which is greatly in excess of its proper capacity.

Northey Street, by the addition of two class-rooms, has secured separation and quiet for its elder Bible Classes and devotional meetings, which gives not only comfort, but promotes success in spiritual work.

Nichol Street did its utmost during the year to compensate for the temporary absence of one of its ablest superintendents. Mr. Barnard, the afternoon superintendent, obtained a good substitute for his work, and undertook the onerous task of superintending the Evening School. In this

he was ably supported by Mr. Henderson. The attendance frequently reached 800. The afternoon superintendent has laboured very hard to secure punctual attendance by the issuing of early attendance tickets, which has involved expense, principally personal, the money value being over two shillings each Sunday. The kind friends, mostly connected with Union Chapel, have not relaxed in their noble service, but continue, notwithstanding the distance of three miles, to attend in large numbers.

DAY SCHOOLS.

In the north and east of London the number of schools for boys is seventeen; for girls, thirteen; and fifty-nine mixed. Total average attendance, 11,000.

In addition to these there are three country Day Schools, with an average attendance of 270.

The panic created by the fear of failing funds has led to the closing of four schools, while from the same cause four others have ceased to be free. The following schools either are, or shortly will be, in connection with the London School Board:—Willow Walk, Colchester Street, Ingram Place, Hornsey Road, Whitecross Place, Chequer Alley and Court.

SCHOOL MATERIAL.

To facilitate method and measure progress, it is advisable that the miscellaneous sheets and books be superseded by standard reading books, which are useful also for determining the writing and arithmetic required in connection with the respective standards. Laurie's books have these excellences —the lessons are short and attractive, and the books thin; there is plenty of opportunity for "line upon line."

ASSISTANT TEACHERS.

To schools having an average attendance of about ninety children, and employing assistant teachers, I beg to recommend that towards their payment liberal help be given, and generally that schools should be so aided as to stimulate and reward efficient service.

EXAMINATIONS.

During the year ninety-one Day Schools were examined. Number of children present was 11,295. Number of age for examination was 6,871. Reading, good, 1st quality, 856; 2nd quality, 851; total, 1,707; moderate, 1,454; total passed in reading, 3,161. Writing, good, 1st quality, 557; 2nd ditto, 1,021; total, 1,638; moderate, 1,081; total passed in writing, 2,719. Scripture, good, 1,247; moderate, 1,524; total, 2,771. Tables, multiplication, 1,556; money, 825. Arithmetic—Simple Rules—Addition, 2,864; Subtraction, 1,480; Multiplication, 1,257; Short Division, 774; Long Division, 273. Compound Rules—Addition, 340; Subtraction, 171; Multiplication, 147; Short Division, 100; Long Division, 40.

The notation is very defective, which would not have been the case had Agent's suggestion been adopted.

Nearly all the schools were examined by a Government Inspector. Some few passed in all subjects, viz., Ingram Place, Hornsey Road, Hammond Square, Britannia Street, Britannia Row, Brunswick Street, Sandwich Street Infants, Sandwich Street Elder Girls in reading and writing, Pell Street, Shadwell Railway, Castle Street, Charles Street, and Drury Lane. Some others passed favourably in reading and writing, but failed in arithmetic. Others might have passed had the number present been an ordinary attendance. For instance, in one school the usual attendance is seventy, whereas on the day of examination 100 were present. The number required to pass was much greater; and, further, for classification, the papers not being in the hands of the teachers, the ages were taken as given by the children to the inspector. This led, in many cases, to their being examined in a higher standard than their proper age justified; and further, in many schools the reading material is of a miscellaneous character, viz., sheet lessons, Scriptures, &c., whereas the official test is certain standard books. In the ordinary government schools these are read and re-read, individually and collectively, till the book is well-nigh known by heart; or, at any rate, so well known that one or two words suggest an entire sentence.

As a curiosity of inspection it may be stated that Charles Street, Drury Lane (Boys'), failed under one inspector, and ten days afterwards passed successfully under another and a not less rigid inspector. So also did Brackley Street pass on a second examination.

The failure in arithmetic was attributable to the children being unaccustomed to take the sums from dictation. Moreover, there sums were dictated to the upper classes at one time. The multiplication was by three figures.

The sum set in addition would be as follows:—40,135+37+111+14+4003 +17,105. Few succeeded in writing such a sum correctly. The children could add, subtract, and multiply, but failing in notation, the arithmetic went for nothing.

Schools devoted to "waifs and strays," to the education of a migratory class, could not be expected under ordinary conditions to satisfy the government standard, and to refuse such teachers on account of failure the opportunity of sitting for a certificate is a great mistake. In some cases for a school to have failed would constitute its greatest claim to consideration. The teachers of such are moral and religious forces, who impart their life and lift their youthful charge to a higher platform of being.

EVENING SCHOOLS.

The number under Agent's supervision is forty boys', thirty girls', and thirty-six mixed.

Total average attendance, 4,500. The attendance at some of the Evening Schools is low in number. It would be well that a minimum average should be fixed, below which number the grant would not be payable. THE MINIMUM HAS BEEN FIXED AT TWENTY-FIVE. Two schools, on account of low attendance, have had their grants suspended.

Sundry irregularities have been discovered in the course of visitation.

In one case a new teacher had shown a preference for the clean and intelligent, and a manifest disposition to receive small fees. The committee, on information, immediately arrested this tendency, and subsequently dismissed the master.

On another occasion a new teacher was inundated by a company of children of the right class, but nevertheless day scholars. Agent made a clean sweep of them. The committee were thankful for this interference.

Sanders Street, Commercial Road.—The Rev. C. Vaughan, agreeable to suggestions received, changed his master, by which the school has largely increased in numbers and efficiency.

Kingsland, in the new building, has plenty of room and light, and an increase of teaching power.

Bluegate Fields has secured the services of Mr. Round, much known in the east of London for his Christian work.

Rochester Mews still distinguishes itself by the coarse, ill-conditioned, big lads who attend, and who are held in excellent control. Miss James still conducts with success, in a separate room, a class of youths and men, who seem to hold her in great respect. *Albert Street* held an inaugural meeting, at which the Rev. Mr. Tyler, Messrs. Williams and Lloyd, and Agent, attended. There was such a unanimity of opinion as to the importance of sufficient voluntary aid, and so urgent an appeal made to the meeting, that the response was equally hearty. No less than thirty-three persons promised to give one or more attendance weekly. The number of boys and girls in attendance has been 150. *Ingram Place.*—The committee and friends have conducted the Evening School from the time of its renewal in order to liberate the master, who was preparing to sit for his certificate. *Nichol Street* maintains its honourable position for discipline and general efficiency, and numbers both of teachers and scholars. *Morton Road* also conducted by voluntary teachers, has been careful to exclude day scholars. The number of its teachers has been fairly sustained, and its teaching more useful by its confinement to those most needing it. These two institutions are supplied with teachers principally from the Rev. Dr. Allon's congregation, which is also responsible for their maintenance. *Lamb and Flag.*—The master's ill-health prevented his attending the Evening School. Mr. Soltau not only engaged an evening master, but induced the missionary and many others of the teachers to give their aid, so that the school has not only been maintained, but has flourished. From 60 to 70 boys are present each evening. The Girls' School also has an attendance varying from 70 to 80. The total attendance sometimes reaches 150. *Hammond Square*, at Agent's suggestion, made a social meeting into an inaugural one, and succeeded in gaining several persons to help the Evening School. When the master was absent, the order and conduct of the school by voluntary teachers was excellent.

Brewer's Court.—The attendance had much declined. The long distance the master came imperilled the punctuality and the certainty of his attendance, and also induced a desire to break off early. Agent laid these matters before the secretary, who lost no time in efforts to remedy them. A visitation has been made of the neighbourhood, which has resulted in an

increase of attendance; and the master will remove nearer. The decline or non-increase of evening attendance is greatly due to non-publication by bill, board, and canvass, or to the want of energy in the teacher. In schools where only a paid master or mistress is employed, if the number averages thirty-five, assistants should be hired at a cost of one shilling per night, the Ragged School Union giving a moiety of the same. Besides, some notice might be taken in a monetary or other way of those who secure the most needy class, the best order, the greatest activity, and the most progress.

FLOWER SHOWS

have been held at Ferdinand Place, Kentish Town, Camden Street, Chequer Alley, and Nichol Street. Some schools combined an Industrial Exhibition with the Flower Show.

BIBLE CLASSES.

There are upwards of forty of these very useful institutions, with an average attendance of over 900. They are most useful as classes of preparation for teachers.

PENNY BANKS.

There are sixty-eight of these useful institutions, with 20,000 depositors. Amount deposited, £6,700; withdrawn, about £6,000. Vine Street is superintended by a lady, who pays the interest out of her own pocket.

RAGGED CHURCHES,

or Mission Services, are held, to the number of fifty-one, with an attendance of 4,000. One at Brewer Street, and the other at Parker Street, are noticeable as being held by two members of this Committee.

PARENTS' MEETINGS.

Of these there are fifty, with an attendance of 1,800. Some of these are largely attended, as those of Nichol Street and Lamb and Flag, and are worked with a prominent regard to spiritual results.

CLOTHING CLUBS.

Thirty-six of these useful institutions promote the tidiness and comfort of the children.

BANDS OF HOPE

number some thirty-three, with an attendance of 3,100. These institutions are worked with spirit.

Some difficulty has arisen during the year in consequence of the action of the School Boards, and some friends have had great fear of failing funds; but it is satisfactory to know that for the most part these fears have been happily frustrated. And our friends are just beginning to learn that, whatever amount of work will fall to the Board, the necessities of London are so vast and diversified that there will be more need than ever for the special work of Ragged Schools.

Poet's Corner.

CHRIST'S GARDEN.

"I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse."—Cant. v. 1.

THE flowers that in Christ's garden have a place,
How lovely they appear!
Of diverse hue, and odour, form, and grace,
They stand together there.

Yea, it is ever charming to the godly mind
The work of grace to see:
The beams of grace call virtues forth of every kind,
In rich variety!

Here holy wisdom blooms; and here simplicity;
And gentle patience there
Grows near the cross; devotion here; there purity—
And beauty everywhere.

And thus the self-same Spirit worketh as He will,
In each as seemeth meet;
And when each chosen polished stone its place shall fill,
The temple is complete!

Children's Gallery.

TWO DROPS OF OIL.

A lover of Jesus had led many into the Ragged School from the broad highway.

After the day's duties were done many thronged to him for advice and relief of one kind or another. Amongst them came a sin-hardened youth, not for clothing or encouragement, but for relief from a painful wound he had received in a street quarrel, and which, from neglect, was growing serious. The kind man gently poured in two drops of oil on the surface of the wound. The pain subsided. The wound was finally healed.

The wild boy never forgot the act. He could not dismiss the thoughts it occasioned. That small act of kindness was the means of leading him to Jesus, the Great Physician, and to-day that once ragged lad stands as an ambassador for Christ.

My young friend, are these not comforting words for you to speak? Can you not pour oil on some wounded spirit? or can you not lead some soul to the balm of Gilead?

Now is the time to do it. Do it at once! ELLA.

NEVER TAUGHT TO PRAY.

A POOR little child said to his mother, on his return from the infant Ragged School, "Teacher taught me to say my prayers this morning; shall I teach you, mother?"

And with this the little fellow of scarce four years old got on to his mother's lap and kneeling with his tiny hands clasped, repeated the prayer his good teacher had taught him.

Shall I tell you what followed the teaching of this little one? The poor mother said to me, with tears in her

eyes, "Ah! ma'am, I did feel how I had neglected my child, for I had never aught him to pray; but I will try to do better for the future."

And she began by joining a Bible Class for poor women which I held on Sunday afternoons. As time went on, she told me she found these a great help to her, for she was very ignorant of Scripture. After two or three years her husband died, leaving her with twin babies and five other children. She then felt, and I was thankful to witness that God's word had entered her heart, and by the teaching and comfort of the Holy Spirit she was enabled to say, "I have found the Father of the fatherless, and the God of the widow to be *my* God and *my* Father, and Jesus is my everlasting friend and Saviour." C. S. W.

Facts and Scraps.

ITALIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL MAGAZINE.—During the past year the *Amico dei Fanciulli*, a new journal for children, has been issued. For several years previously a Sunday School paper, entitled the *Scuola della Domenica*, had been published in Italy, but at the end of 1869 it ceased to appear, and the *Amico dei Fanciulli* took its place. Nearly the whole edition of the former paper was distributed gratuitously; but it was resolved to charge the small sum of *one franc* per annum for the new journal. Although the number of copies that were printed of the *Amico dei Fanciulli* was double the number of the *Scuola della Domenica*, they were soon found to be quite insufficient to supply the demand, and it was resolved to commence a new series with the beginning of 1871. Since the commencement of this series the circulation has risen to 3,000 copies monthly. Soon it is hoped that this journal will take its place amongst those that are most widely circulated in Italy, and exert a powerful influence for good on both the Roman Catholic and Protestant youth of this land.

DISINFECTING DWELLING ROOMS.—Some recent experiments prove the defectiveness of the ordinary process of disinfecting dwelling-rooms, without at the same time stripping off the paper and washing the walls and painted surfaces with caustic soda. In Manchester nearly all the men engaged in this duty have had fever or infectious disease, although the houses previous to their visits had been disinfected with chlorine, carbolic acid, &c. It is believed that contagious matter is retained in the paper, particularly when a number of layers have accumulated on the walls. In some cases the men removed as many as fifteen coats of paper, and they describe a fusty odour, which of itself may possibly give rise to fever. We would recall to our readers the case of the Knightsbridge barracks, where the accumulation of successive layers of size and paper formed a nidus for thousands of maggots. We must not, therefore, be satisfied with mere cleansing, whitewashing, and repainting, but insist also on the cleansing and scouring of the walls. It is satisfactory to find that the recurrence of fever in the same houses in Manchester has greatly diminished since the introduction of this thorough mode of cleansing.

RECOVERY OF MONEY SPENT FOR DRINK.—A Michigan woman has recovered by law all the money that her husband had spent in a liquor saloon for six years. The prohibitory liquor law of that State does not regard alcohol as "property," and the woman recovered the money on the ground that it had been paid to the liquor vendor without consideration.

LOAN SOCIETIES.—The annual return

of loan societies in England gives an abstract of the accounts of 531 for the year 1870. At the end of that year they had 34,883 members, and sums amounting to £400,712 were in borrowers' hands. In the course of the year there had been 144,489 applications for loans, and as many as 132,933 loans were made. Sums amounting to £8,696 were received for forms of application and for inquiry, and £31,589 for interest; the expenses of management were £17,678; the net profit is returned at £19,958. Many of the societies return some loss in the year, the aggregate of losses being £1,812. It appears that 9,809 summonses were issued in the year for sums amounting to £21,138; and there were 2,137 distress warrants; £16,957 was recovered. Costs to the amount of £2,498 were incurred in recovering loans, and £2,076 was paid by borrowers, or sureties, for costs. The societies are chiefly found in the metropolis and in Lancashire and Yorkshire. Many have but a small capital to lend, but Manchester has a loan society with £4,900 in borrowers' hands, Bolton has one with £11,004, Birmingham one with £17,170, and Nottingham one with £15,674 lent out when the year closed.

What People Drink. — An analysis of beer sold in the London public-houses was recently made, and with the following results:—Twelve samples were procured; of these twelve, eleven were salted, eleven had colouring matter, five in large quantities, and in all there was an extra quantity of water. Setting aside the best sample as too good, and the worst as too bad for an average, the calculations made from the remaining ten are as follows:—To 1,180 gallons of beer, as brewed, 1,064 gallons of coloured water were added, and the 2,244 gallons, costing less than £40, were sold for £120. This is rather more than a reasonable profit. But there is consolation in the fact that no article positively injurious to health was used.

Ginger Beer.—As ginger beer is a favourite beverage at children's excursions it is well to know what it is too often made of. The *Food Journal* offers a word or two on the dangers of ginger beer drinking. Even were it honestly made, our ginger-beer is not a wholesome thing. What man who has ever felt the pangs of dyspepsia could wish a fellow-creature a worse fate than to be condemned to the consumption of a few bottles of one of the specimens we have analysed, and which contain:—1. Enough acetic acid to make a tablespoonful of common vinegar. 2. Four grains of cream of tartar. 3. A trace of copper; and the whole imprisoned in a bottle smelling of paraffin?

Romanism in Great Britain.—From the "brag" of the organs of Ultramontanism we might be led to suppose that Popery is about to dominate in Britain. But what is the fact? Though there is an increase in its adherents, we are glad to say that there is a positive decrease as regards the population at large. Thus one who is well acquainted with the statistics of Protestantism and Romanism, the Rev. Hobart Seymour, points out the encouraging fact that, whereas in 1801 the Romanists were 27 per cent. of the population, in 1871 they were only 17 per cent. Romanists had only increased from 4,363,305 to 5,482,682, or 25 per cent., while Protestants had increased from 11,354,401 to 25,982,725, or 128 per cent.

What Popery is morally one very painful fact will tell, viz., 25 per cent. of criminals in England, in our jails, are Roman Catholics, though they are only one-twentieth of the population.

Notices of Meetings.

FIELD LANE.

On Thursday evening, June 3rd, the friends of the above institution held its thirtieth anniversary in the upper Schoolroom, Little Saffron Hill, Farringdon Road, the Earl of Shaftesbury in the chair.

Mr. Samuel Tawell, hon. sec., then read the Report, in which he reviewed the past and forecast the future, saying, that the institution began thirty-one years ago with a Bible School, in which its founders endeavoured to gather all those waifs and strays of the neighbourhood which the ordinary Sunday Schools of the period would not admit. Out of this two other works soon grew—a Day School for children, whose deplorable condition elicited sympathy, but whom no National or British schoolmaster would take in, and a Night Refuge as a public temporary home for wanderers. From these have sprung, from time to time, a Ragged Church, a Parents' Service, a Children's Church, a Crêche, a Night School, a Youths' Institute, an Industrial School, Sewing Classes, Penny Dinners, a Penny Bank, a Band of Hope, a Special Relief Fund, a Clothing Club, a Maternity Society, a Servants' Training Home, &c. Admission to the Night Refuge, since the establishment of Casual Wards in connection with the Workhouses, was now only extended to men and women of character who came friendless into London and required temporary help. In the Industrial Schools there were 100 boys and girls. In the Crêche, 70 babies. 68 boys and girls had kept their situations upwards of twelve months, to the satisfaction of their employers. In the Girls' Sewing Classes the average attendance had been 200. In the Women's Sewing Class, 70. There had been 762 depositors in the Penny Bank, who had paid in £244 2s. 3d. There had been 496 received into the Men's Refuge, who had been supplied with 156 garments on leaving. In the Women's Refuge 653 had been received, of whom 102 had obtained work, 118 had been sent to domestic service, 78 to Homes, 43 to Hospitals, 5 to Industrial Schools, 10 restored to friends, and 36 put into the Servants' Training Home, the needy receiving 132 garments on leaving. Out of the Servants' Home, 125 had been sent into service. The Sunday Bible Schools averaged from 700 to 1,050; Children's Morning Service, 70; Ragged Church, 380.

The income had been £2,683, and the expenditure £3,724, or £1,041 in excess of the receipts, but this deficiency was amply provided for by a balance of £1,800 with which operations for the year were commenced.

MAIDA HILL.

The annual meeting of this institution was held on Monday evening at the Richmond Street Infant Schoolroom, under the presidency of George Hanbury, Esq. The room was crowded in every part, the audience being of a mixed character as regards both sex and condition in life. There were many scores of poor inhabitants of the neighbourhood in the back part of the room. Behind the speakers were ranged some forty boys of the Home in clean white smocks; and before the business of the evening commenced, they sang several airs with great precision and gusto combined.

The Report said that the Committee commenced the past year with a deficit of £120, but the whole of this incubus was now removed. The Day School having been compelled to be closed because it was not commodious enough to enable expenses to be met, the committee were glad to state that a large

proportion of the children attending it immediately obtained admission to the Infant School in Richmond Street. The Richmond Street Night Ragged School had been well attended all the year round on Sunday evenings, and on two week-day evenings in the winter. The one great need in this branch of the work was said to be more voluntary teachers. The Industrial Home was spoken most favourably of. The lads had been in good health, and their earnings at printing and paper bag manufacturing were large. The receipts from this source were £812 14s. 9d.; of which £277 18s. 1½d. was the surplus over cost of materials available towards the support of the boys, and it was believed that no other institution of the kind could show such a profitable margin. The Government Inspector had reported very favourably of the educational standing of the lads. As many as 725 boys had been admitted to the Refuge during the past twenty years, there being now forty-five in the institution.

The Chairman said that although most Reports had the character of being dry reading, the one they had just listened to was an interesting as well as a complete and perfect report. He said that a mistaken notion existed on the part of many people as to the nature of the work being altogether "ragged," and he added that beyond Ragged Schools they wanted the establishment of "Ragged Churches." He did not think the School Board could ever do the work of Ragged Schools, either from a Christian or an industrial point of view, and he dwelt on the fact that girls as well as boys were taken in hand by the schools. He then passed to the difficulty experienced in getting young men teachers, and expressed his regret that preaching was preferred amongst them to teaching. The young men at Tichborne Street, he said, could not be prevailed on to turn their attention to this department of Christian labour.

PERKINS'S RENTS.

The fifteenth anniversary meeting was recently held, the Right Hon. the Earl of Shaftesbury in the chair.

Mr. John Burnham, the treasurer, read the following abstract of the Report, which said that a baby's frock made by some of the girls was graciously accepted by H.R.H. the Princess of Wales two years since. Recently we have had an addition to our little band of helpers in the Sunday School, which is open in the afternoon from half-past two to four. The Monthly Prayer Meeting is held as usual, when generally a good number of children are present. The Clothing Club is still carried on; the amount deposited during the year was £7 7s. 1½d., on which 10s. 8½d. was added when paid out at Christmas. The Band of Hope continues to assemble every Wednesday evening, from seven till nine o'clock, in the One Tun Schoolroom. By means of suitable addresses and learning melodies and hymns bearing on temperance, these young people are led to understand some of the evils caused by the intemperance by which they are surrounded. 109 children were depositors in the Band of Hope Penny Bank; during the year £28 15s. 3d. was deposited. The Mothers' Meeting continues to be held every Monday evening from seven till half-past nine in this schoolroom. Upwards of a hundred mothers are members of the little society. The Boot Club has been very useful; the fourth club was recently completed with sixty-two members. Fourpence in the shilling is allowed to the women on the materials supplied to them, and the tape, cotton, needles, &c., are supplied gratuitously. The cost of the materials was £90 1s. 8d., towards which the mothers contributed £63 7s. 6d. The Dwelling-house, Old Pye Street, has now been occupied six years, and the sanitary state of the occupants is very satisfactory; during the prevalence of the smallpox in London there were only three cases in Westminster Buildings, one only being fatal.

Papers, Original and Selected.

DRINKING FOUNTAINS.

It is painful to know that in most parts of Heathendom, Great Britain is less known by its Christianity than by its national sin—drunkenness. Hence many missionaries complain that this vice of our soldiers and sailors becomes a strong bar to the reception of the religion of Jesus. This led a Hindoo Baboo recently to utter a bitter satire—"Brethren, suppose we found a society to convert the Christians!"

Unhappily, if any one is predisposed to a vice which destroys first the body and then the soul, every facility is given for its gratification. Thus, for example, within a radius of fifteen miles from King's Cross there are nearly 11,000 gin-palaces or beershops. This fact renders it not surprising that in one week 270,000 persons were counted as they entered fourteen of the principal gin-palaces. This gives an average of nearly 40,000 worshippers daily at these fourteen shrines of Bacchus. The number who drink drugged gin at the remaining gin-palaces, any ragged scholar can readily calculate. The fact of the undue proportion of gin-palaces and beershops equally applies to the population at large. This fact, too, holds good as respects the whole of England, for the Registrar-General reports that there are no less than 186,096 public-houses in the provinces; in other words, one for every forty-five male adults.

In most of these the liquors are drugged. Thus analysts report that copperas is added in large quantities to give a foaming "head," and salt to excite thirst. "Cabmen's mixture," too, is a popular beverage at beershops near cab-ranks. It is thus seen that poison is imbibed wholesale by the wretched frequenters of bars or tap-rooms.

To say that this inordinate love of drink is a most fertile source of disease and crime, is almost as unnecessary as to affirm that two and three make five. Last year, for example, nearly 100,000 persons—or 200 per diem—were rendered so incapable or furious with alcoholic liquors that they were, either for their own or the public safety, arrested by the police. Of these, 25,000 were females—most of them mothers, and many with babies in their

arms. No one, indeed, can visit any part of London without seeing how the vice of drinking is growing among respectable females, if dress and manners are any criteria. The vending of wine and liquors by confectioners is doubtless one cause of this, for women who would be ashamed to enter a gin-palace can readily, and, alas! do, gratify their morbid tastes at these shops without exciting any notice. Whatever, then, was the motive for licensing confectioners to sell wine, a greater mistake was never made in the interests of temperance.

Nor is this all. The annals of lunatic asylums tell how large is the number of inmates who come there solely through drunkenness, secret or open. In addition to this, 5,000 persons died last year of that most frightful of all disorders—rightly named by our sailors, "the horrors"—delirium tremens.

Happily, something is being done to check the growth of this sin. Chief among these are those Bands of Hope which seek, not to cure, but to prevent the habitual use of stimulants in more mature years. The children of the poor are peculiarly liable to contract this habit. We have, for instance, often seen foolish mothers give the gin-bottle to mere babies, on the plea that "What is good for us, *must* be good for them." We are glad, then, to find that so many Ragged Schools have attached Bands of Hope to their other machinery. At present forty such juvenile temperance societies are conducted in our schools, with a united membership of 6,702. How much better is this plan than that so fashionable of locking the door *after* the steed is stolen!

Probably much of the undue use of stimulants is due to the lassitude caused by the bad or overcrowded houses tenanted by the very poor. This leads, in many cases, to the use of stimulants to recruit the exhausted physical energies. Then, again, the bulk of London water is notorious for its impurity; even when, as in the case of Bermondsey, there is not a positive water-famine. In our youthful days the London springs—the "living water" which was drawn from earth-caverns—were famous for their salubrity. But for many years the parish pumps have been properly locked up, for the infiltration from grave-yards had rendered them so many fountains of poison. It is this which leads too many to resort to stimulants, on the plea that pure water is so much liquid poison; forgetting that the beer they drink is brewed from the very same water.

Happily, some attempt has been made to remedy the difficulty in getting pure water by wayfarers by the "Drinking Fountain Association." The first was opened about fourteen years ago by Mr. G. Melly, M.P., in Liverpool. This fountain soon became so popular—was resorted to by so many thousands daily—that this benevolent man was led to erect several other drinking fountains in the most central parts of that great commercial city. The success of this experiment led Mr. Samuel Gurney to erect one at the corner of St. Sepulchre's Church, Snow Hill. The first day it was opened no less than 5,000 persons partook of the well-filtered water of this fountain. Every summer day since, the boon has been equally appreciated by throngs of labourers, who are thus led to turn their backs on the public-house, through the superior attractions of the "crystal spring."

A great impetus was given to this movement by the establishment of the "Drinking Fountain Association" in 1859. It now includes troughs for cattle and dogs, as well as fountains for men, among its operations. There are now above 300 of such fountains in London and its environs. But at least 100 more are still needed, especially on the south side of the Thames; for while the east, west, and north are well supplied, as respects Southwark and Bermondsey drinking fountains are "conspicuous by their absence." As a large number of drinking fountains have been erected by private persons, we think that no one could confer a more lasting boon on their poorer brethren than by erecting fountains in the squalid districts just named.

Many of the fountains erected by private persons are very ornamental. Those erected by the Association are invariably plain and simple, as the directors rightly prefer to erect many plain rather than a few artistic fountains. But drinking fountains of a more artistic and expensive character have been erected by Baroness Burdett Coutts in Victoria Park; and by the late Mr. C. Buxton, M.P., in Palace Yard, in memory of his revered father. Of such fountains there are now in course of erection at Holland Park two memorial ones to the late Lord Holland, by a few of his lordship's friends; and another at Primrose Hill in memory of that great friend of Ragged Schools, the late Judge Payne, the cost of which has been defrayed by those teetotal and other admirers who have not yet forgotten what he did to improve the condition of our poorer brethren.

It is pleasing to find how the friends of the Gospel have caused these fountains to preach silently but effectually to every wayfarer. Thus most have admirably selected texts conspicuously inscribed. Amongst these the most favourite are—"If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink;" "Let him that is athirst come;" "Take of the water of life freely." Thus the water of this world is made, as in Bible times, to speak in parable of that purer water of Heaven which alone can satisfy the thirst of the soul.

From the new Report of the Drinking Fountain Association we are glad to learn that there is no lack of funds to sustain this movement. Thus it appears that in 1871, £4,233 were subscribed either to support the old or to erect new fountains and cattle troughs. The cost of the fountains for repair and water supply averages nearly £10 a year each, but the cost of the cattle troughs varies with their size and the locality in which they are placed. The small dog troughs are supplied entirely with the waste water from the fountains to which they are attached, but for the larger troughs the water-rate alone in some cases is as much as £30 per annum. Above 1,200 horses (besides other animals) frequently drink at one trough in twenty-four hours. During the past year the expenditure for the maintenance and repair of existing fountains and troughs, erections, removals, re-erections, water supply, workmen's wages, &c., was £3,450 13s. 1d.

Some of the water companies, we are glad to find, supply water free of cost, and others at a very reduced rate. But it would appear that the "New River" Company—the richest of all—has not imitated the example of the poorer companies. With £100 shares of the marketable value of £13,000, surely this ought not to be the case.

With facts like these, need we say that we wish god-speed to this great social movement? For these drinking fountains, whilst they refresh many a weary labourer, also give him the opportunity of quenching thirst without resorting to the public-house, to the injury, if not ruin, of body and soul. In this way they operate practically to counteract the "drinking customs" of society, and thus preclude the temptation to inordinate drink, with all the sin and misery thereby entailed. Nor can we forget that by their Bible mottoes, they silently though powerfully speak day after day to our home heathen of that Gospel-river "the streams whereof make glad the city of God!"

SYMPATHY OF JESUS.

BY THE REV. R. W. DALE, M.A.

THERE are certain physical conditions in which it is hard to trust quietly in God's love, and to keep the image of Christ in our own character and conduct unclouded. The physical exhaustion which follows severe pain or excessive anxiety and labour, seems sometimes to drain away all our moral strength. The weakness of the flesh makes the spirit weak too. Utter lassitude comes upon us, and strenuous exertion seems impossible.

He to whom the angels ministered after his forty days' fast in the wilderness, knows what this infirmity is, and from him we shall have timely help. Or the conflict between plain duty and the common instincts and affections of our nature may assume a severe form. We may be required by conscience to abandon prospects of ease, and comfort, and honour; we may have to incur the distrust and opposition of friends; to inflict pain on those we most dearly love; to imperil or sacrifice the chief joy of our earthly life; to provoke the hostility of powerful enemies—slander we cannot repel, calumny we cannot silence, reproach which seems just, and which we must be content to bear; it is hard to master and quiet the agitation of our heart, to triumph over natural passions in the strength of a Divine affection; but He who was "tempted like as we are" will give timely help.

Above all, when we are disheartened by disappointment in our Christian work, when friends melt away from our side like deserters from an army which has been broken in spirit by long marches, or by repeated defeats; when our labours are spoiled by the negligence or mistakes or inconsistencies of those in whom we have confided; when we are thwarted in our best endeavours by secret jealousy, by unuttered suspicion, by open hatred; when prayer seems to have no power; when toil seems wasted; when the understandings of men remain unconvinced by the most conclusive arguments, their hearts untouched by the most affecting motives, their consciences hardened against the most startling appeals; when those who had begun to do well turn back into sin, and those who had long been faithful are gradually drifting away from what they once supremely cared for; when no plan of well-doing can command sympathy or aid, no right principle manly support; when the good cause seems baffled on every side, and yet we are called to struggle on, heart and flesh failing;—then, above all, we may turn to Him who seemed to labour in vain and spend his strength for nought, and he will sympathise with our weakness, remembering his own. He will rekindle the sinking flame of courage and hopefulness, by telling us that he himself had to be bruised and put to grief, to be despised and rejected of men, before he could see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied: it was for the suffering of death that he was crowned with glory and honour. He will not upbraid us in our utmost prostration, but will listen graciously, for he knoweth our frame and remembereth that we are dust.

GEORGE YARD RAGGED SCHOOL, WHITECHAPEL.

A WRITER in the *Christian World* gives the following sketch of the surroundings and of the work carried on in George Yard Ragged School, Whitechapel. Now let us imagine that the doors of this valuable institution were shut, and we can readily infer what would be the condition of the population within five years of their extinction. So rampant would be vice and crime that there would be a general cry for its re-establishment; but it would then, alas, be a *day too late!*

"As you go down Whitechapel, and before you come to the church, on your left is George Yard, on one side is a public-house, on the other a pawn broker's. George Yard lies between the two. I had been there before, and it looked very dreary and desolate. It was one winter evening, and round a comfortless fire, and in a very comfortless sort of room, Mr. Holland was sitting talking with his little ragged and shoeless children. I did not stop long. I was on my way for a lower depth, but the sight is still fresh in my memory as a Dutch painting.

Since then times have gone well with George Yard. It has been cleaned up and fresh painted, and its dark walls are bright with pictures, and last week it was crowded with its friends, male and female, rich and poor, who had come to celebrate its eighteenth anniversary. There was the Earl of Shaftesbury in the chair, and if, as an American writer remarks, Englishmen dearly love a lord, it is pardonable if the poor of the east of London admire an earl, whose whole life has been devoted to bettering the condition of such as they. There were clergymen, Church and Dissenting, present. Bright flowers were on the platform. Everything looked clean and cheerful, and the audience were in good spirits. They had come to hear what they all knew before, and nothing is more pleasing to people in general than to be told on the platform or in the pulpit what they already know.

For one thing George Yard is to be commended. There is a great deal of good done at comparatively little cost. The expenditure had not been much more than £383. It is now many years since the old distillery in George Yard has been converted to its present uses, and apparently its labours are as much needed as ever. Around it are the same courts and alleys and overcrowded dwellings. Along its neighbouring highway there is the same dense throng tramping on, many, it is to be feared, to a bad end, morning, noon, and night. No wonder there is poverty down Whitechapel, for nowhere are the public-houses that create it more numerous and capacious. No wonder there is crime there, for in its low lodging-houses, and in the tanglement of its dimly-lighted arched passages and slums, detection is difficult, and escape for the time from the hands of justice easy. At the same time it must be joyfully admitted that during the last fifteen years crime has greatly diminished, and the criminal population has much decreased. The supply of the latter is stopped by the labours of Ragged Schools. Where one was formed, as many as three thieves' training schools had been broken up. At one time it was impossible to walk through some portions of the neighbourhood without being interfered with; now it is

seldom that any one is molested. The labours of such institutions as those of George Yard clearly have not been in vain.

Let me speak of that work which has now been carried on by Mr. Holland and his few helpers. There is the Day School, with an average attendance of 400, where the children are taught reading, writing, and arithmetic, and have, besides, a direct Christian training. There is the Week Evening School, attended by boys and girls, who have got their victuals and drink in the day-time; this portion of the work would be more extensively useful, if friends could be found to devote their time and energies to teaching these young ones; and this is, as Mr. Holland tells us, the greatest of all his wants; every one with leisure gets away from Whitechapel, consequently such as he have to labour alone. On each side of the platform and pulpit of the institution are little closets, boarded in. These are what he calls his training rooms, and here he prepares, from his most hopeful subjects, his future fellow-labourers. It is wise in him to do so; only so are the wants of the place to be met. The Sunday School is taught by a band of devoted teachers. The Band of Hope has saved many from Britain's curse. And for girls besides there are Sewing and Darning Classes.

During the last seven years, hundreds of outcast boys have passed through the shelter in Wentworth Street. Of these 250 have been restored to their parents; 140 are earning their own living; between 200 and 300 have become shoeblacks; 140 have been sent to homes and refuges. A hundred have been taken out to Canada by Miss Macpherson, and most cheeringly they write of their new homes and friends.

During the year about 45,000 rations of food were distributed; this includes what was given to the inmates of the schools, and special soup suppers provided for street boys. Further, many children have been clothed with left-off clothing, sent by friends, and there have been special Sunday Evening Services for such.

So much for the children, now for the adults. There is a Sunday Evening Service for them, with an attendance of from 150 to 300. A Tuesday Evening Prayer Meeting, with an attendance of from 60 to 130. There have been Services in the Lodging-houses around, some of the latter having as many as 300 inmates; Open Air Services; Temperance Meetings, which have reclaimed hundreds of poor drunkards; Adult Bible Classes, attended by from eighteen to thirty persons; and other agencies are at work, all tending to the social and religious reformation of the district. Altogether it is calculated that about 1,000 children are thus brought under Christian influences, and nearly 1,200 people week by week are thus brought within the sound of the Gospel."

CONCERT OF PRAYER FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

The hon. secretaries of the Sunday School Union have just issued the following circular, inviting Sunday School teachers throughout the world to devote Sunday, 20th October next, to a concert of prayer. We need scarcely say that we trust every Ragged School, and all Ragged School teachers, will respond to this appeal, for then we believe that instead of having only to

record a conversion here, and another there, we shall soon have "showers of blessings." "If we have not, it is because we *ask* not."

"'Arise, cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up thy hands toward him for the life of thy young children, 'that *faint for hunger in the top of every street.*'—Lamentations ii. 19.

It has been thought by the Committee of the Sunday School Union, that in view of the solemn and increasing responsibilities of their work, their fellow-labourers would gladly welcome the proposal to appoint a day on which teachers throughout the land might offer *Special Prayer*, both unitedly and privately, on behalf of those committed to their charge.

In answer to such prayer, a new blessing might be confidently expected; while the effect of the hallowed friendship would be felt by both the teacher and the taught; the former being stimulated to more fervid piety and zeal, and the latter being led to a more thoughtful concern for their immortal interests.

The Committee therefore propose that Lord's-day, the 20th day of October, and Monday, the 21st of October, should be set apart for the above purpose, and suggest that the following order should be as closely as possible observed.

That on Lord's-day morning, October 20th, between 7 and 8, all teachers should offer special prayer, in private, for God's blessing upon their work; especially in the conversion of their scholars to Himself.

That in the afternoon of the day the usual services should be varied and each school gathered for prayer, the proceedings being interspersed by suitable addresses.

That in the evening of the day the teachers meet for prayer either before or after public worship.

That on Monday, October 21st, between 7 and 8 a.m., all teachers should again offer special prayer in private, for God's blessing upon their work.

That in the course of the day the female teachers of each school should hold a prayer meeting.

That in the evening a special prayer meeting should be held by every Church on behalf of the Sunday School, suitable and stirring addresses being intermingled with the prayers.

Appropriate topics for supplication and intercession will present themselves to all. Above everything, the prayers should be for a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit, imparting to the teachers heavenly wisdom, to the scholars docility and seriousness; enkindling the deeper interest of the Churches in the work; and leading, as the happy result, to a large ingathering of the young into the fold of Christ.

It is intended to call upon teachers in every part of the world to blend their supplications, so that the poet's thought may be realised in a glorious sense, and

> 'The whole round world be every way
> Bound with gold chains about the feet of God.'

56, Old Bailey, London, E.C., *July*, 1872."

RAGGED SCHOOL UNION EXCURSIONS.

It is on record that Wolsey deputed his physicians to select the most healthy spot within a short distance of London, whereon to erect a mansion for himself.

In doing this, and afterwards in erecting Hampton Court Palace, he could scarcely have contemplated the extent to which it was destined to become a pleasurable resort of future generations. That it was so, however, the thousands which now flock hither every excursion season, abundantly testify—and no wonder. The Palace, with its noble façade, its elegant proportions, its vast extent and magnificence externally, its fine display of armour, its really good collection of pictures, and finely painted ceiling inside, well repays the visitor. Then what attractions the surrounding gardens possess, the beautifully arranged flower beds, the smoothly cut grass plat, the fine display of orange and lemon trees, the patriarchal vine, the puzzling maze, the noble grove and shady alcoves, the giant aloes and cacti, each and all cannot fail to be admired. If you add to this tempting collection the spacious park adjoining, and the River Thames gliding quietly by, it would be difficult to name a more delightful part than Hampton Court Palace and Bushy Park, for the wearied smoke-inhaling Londoner.

For some years past, this place has been selected by the Committee of the Ragged School Union for the annual gathering of the paid teachers of the schools affiliated with the Union. A repetition of this happy custom took place on Saturday, the 6th ult., when 200 friends safely emerged from the Waterloo train at Teddington, and quietly wended their way to Bushy Park. The weather, always an important element in all holiday considerations, was delightfully fine, and, with the exception of a slight storm during dinner, remained so throughout the day. A capacious tent had, as usual, been erected at the extreme end of the park by Mr. Earee, wherein were temptingly arranged the viands and accessories for a substantial dinner. This display was freely dealt with at 1.30 p.m., when several members of the Committee joined the party, and when, to the delight of all, the arrival of Mr. Gent was announced. The reception accorded to him was most hearty, and if anything could compensate him for his dangerous and protracted illness, it would be the great pleasure manifested on all sides on seeing him once more in their midst fast approaching convalescence. Dinner over, Mr. Round, the master of Bluegate Fields School, rose to move a vote of thanks to the Committee on behalf of the teachers, for repeating a kindness fraught with so much pleasure to all participators. He referred in joyous terms to Mr. Gent's presence, expressing the hope, in which every one cordially united, that God would in his mercy speedily effect a complete restoration of health, and permit him to resume his valuable labours among them.

Mr. Buckingham acknowledged, on behalf of the Committee, the thanks of the teachers, and reciprocated the good wishes towards Mr. Gent.

The friends now dispersed to enjoy the many amusements and attractions around; reassembling for tea at five, the evening rapidly approached—much too soon for most—and the time for the return train drew near, as the party slowly but joyously passed under the grand avenue of chestnut and lime trees for the station.

Amid many adieux and shakes of the hand the friends separated at Waterloo Station. We venture to think, however, that the remembrance of this happy day will long remain in the memories of all concerned.

Concurrent with the foregoing record it is our pleasing task to chronicle the

CHILDREN'S EXCURSION

to the same place, on Friday, August 2nd.

A special train was engaged on the North London Railway, and the children were taken up in contingents at Broad Street, Shoreditch, and Camden Road stations. The complement of nearly 1,400 little ones from Ragged Schools, mostly in the east of London, was safely conveyed to Teddington Station by eleven in the morning. Bushy Park was soon resounding with happy voices as they gathered in groups beneath the noble trees, under the fostering care of the teachers. This had scarcely been done when a heavy shower of rain descended, which, unfortunately, proved to be only a precursor of others at frequent intervals during the day.

Although the rain had the effect of damping the grass, it failed to damp the ardour of the children, for they ran, skipped, and jumped about in a most enthusiastic and demonstrative manner. A bountiful tea, including plenty of cake, was served out at an early hour in the afternoon, and the enjoyment afforded by this was considerably heightened by the distribution of the toys shortly afterwards. The effect of the latter was magical. At once the air became resonant with the discordant noises of whistles, of trumpets, of rattles and of squeakers, the whole forming a *pot pourri* more easily imagined than described.

Amid copious downfalls of rain the party assembled by seven in the evening for the return journey, and much relief was felt by those responsible when the children were safely seated in the train again and proceeding towards London.

As the calling stations were reached the train unburdened its living freight, and beyond a few trifling losses, such as a boy's cap, &c., everything passed off without a mishap.

The management of children's trips involves an amount of care and anxiety which only experience can teach. But to see the enjoyment these little ones, who have not too many of the sweets of life, contrive to extract from even a few hours in the country, well repays for whatever trouble may be expended.

To see them, also, we feel sure would be the best form of thanks which could possibly be accorded to those friends who so kindly responded to Lord Shaftesbury's appeal and contributed the needful funds to defray the cost of this "outing."

The growth of these day excursions during the past few years in London has been most marked. It would be difficult to estimate the total number of children who thus annually enjoy a change, but it may be mentioned, and we do it with pleasure, that by the liberality of a generous friend we have, in addition to the foregoing, been enabled to assist twenty-three Ragged Schools in taking out upwards of 4,000 children.

Undoubtedly a "day's outing" is one of the few good things of which we can hardly have too much.

AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY.

CHRISTIANITY is necessarily aggressive. In this it differs from most systems of false religion, and from mere systems of scientific truth. The worshipper of Apollo had no necessary antagonism to the worship of Neptune, or to that of Baal. He might indeed be, at the same time, the advocate and practiser of many different dogmas; he might, and he often did, have many images in presence of the same altar.

But not only is the Christian religion absolute and exclusive in its demands, it is missionary in its very nature. Its office is to bring all men into subjection to its sway. A man who has learned some scientific truth is not thereby converted at once into an apostle to propagate that truth. He may be gratified indeed to see it accepted by others; but such acceptance does not become the chief end and aim of his being.

Not so with Christianity. If Christianity is what it claims to be, not only is the man who accepts it saved, but the man who rejects it is lost. If the believer in it is what he professes to be, his duty does not end in believing on his own account; his main business in life henceforth is to bring others to believe. He becomes a missionary and an apostle, to do in his measure what Christ came to do, to seek the lost.

Infidels and worldly men sometimes urge against the church as a fault, that Christians are not content to be good themselves, but they are all the while obtruding their opinions upon others. This is to mistake the very essence of Christianity. The Christian who does nothing to make others Christian is grievously at fault. He cannot truly believe the momentous truths of Christianity, and at the same time be indifferent to the belief of other men in regard to those truths. His faith therefore is necessarily an aggressive one. It leads him, by the very terms of its own existence, to seek for converts.

The Ragged School is one of the chief agencies for carrying on this aggressive work. No Ragged School is doing its duty in this matter so long as a single child is out of the school who is within its reach and can be induced to attend. So long as the fact remains, as revealed by every census of the population, that the entire number of those in attendance upon the Sunday School is but a sprinkling, as it were, of the juvenile population, there must be grievous sin at the door of the church. Here is a mission work quite as important, and quite as imperative, as missions to the heathen.

Christian people generally are not aware of the greatness of this evil. They see great numbers of children attending Sunday School, and somehow the impression is produced that nearly all the young attend. If, during the hour that the school is being held, they were to go out into the parks and streets and other places of public resort, they would be amazed at the swarms of children roaming at large on the Lord's-day.

These swarms of untaught children, outnumbering those who are in our schools, are growing up thoroughly irreligious. They form the dangerous element of our population. More than that: they have souls to be saved or lost, and every Christian man and woman who can reach them is by

profession a missionary and bound to bring them within the sound of the gospel.

We need not go to China or Japan to find heathen. They are among us, at our doors; they are almost as numerous as ourselves, even if they do not actually outnumber us. Can these heathens at our doors be reached? Who can doubt it?

But here is a mission within the reach of almost every Christian, and that without giving up one's ordinary business. It costs something, of course. There are pecuniary expenses, there must be some labour, some self-denial, some bestowal of time. But of all missionary work there is none so economical in all these respects as the mission work of the Ragged School. There is no aggressive Christian work in which the same amount of money, effort, self-denial, and time, yields an equal amount of substantial result.

More than this. There is no missionary work in which so large a proportion of believers can actively engage. Only here and there one out of many thousands is fitted to engage as a foreign missionary. But almost every one can engage in this mission. Where one is competent to go to the heathen, or even to preach the gospel here, many hundreds are competent to labour in the school. Where one worshipper of Juggernaut, or of Vishnu, can be converted and saved, many hundreds at our doors, souls equally precious, may be converted from an irreligion equally soul-destroying and damning.

This is not an argument against preaching or sending missionaries to the heathen. Let ministers and missionaries be multiplied a hundred fold. But with what cumulative and overwhelming force does every argument for the foreign missionary work apply to mission work at home!

SCHOLARS' PRIZES FOR 1872.

THE Committee of the Ragged School Union, being desirous to encourage good conduct and long-continued service in all who have passed through the Schools of the Union, have again decided on giving prizes to young persons who have kept their situations with good character for twelve months or upwards, and coming within the following conditions, viz.:—

1. They must be over twelve and under eighteen years of age.

2. They must have attended the Ragged School giving the recommendation at least six months previously to having entered their first situation.

3. Having kept one situation for twelve months, they are allowed to make one change, but must not be out of place for more than two weeks; in this case they are eligible for the prize, provided they are in the second place December 31st, 1872. Certificates of character will be required from both situations.

4. For the first year the prize shall consist of seven shillings and sixpence, and a card, provided the committee of the school recommending pay two shillings and sixpence of it.

5. Those who have received a money prize previously, and are again recommended, will be entitled to a prize card, and a book of the value of two shillings and sixpence.

6. They must have been in regular attendance at the Ragged or other Sunday School for the current year. This rule does not apply to *female* domestic servants.

7. Shoeblacks, occasional labourers, scholars partially employed, those engaged by their relatives, or earning more than ten shillings per week, are not eligible for the prizes.

8. Certificates must be furnished by the employers and school authorities, to show that these conditions have been complied with, and that good conduct has been continued to December 31st, 1872.

9. The candidate will lose the benefit that might arise from this application unless all the questions be definitely answered and the certificates fully and accurately filled up, duly signed, and returned to the office, 1, Exeter Hall, on or before January 15, 1873.

The prizes may be given in books, clothes, or otherwise, as the committee of the School may determine.

1, *Exeter Hall, June*, 1872. JOSEPH G. GENT, *Secretary*.

THE BABE AT THE WEDDING.

A SHORT time since the doors of a fashionable West-end church in London were open for a wedding. As is usual on such occasions, some of the passers-by stopped to see the carriages draw up, especially the one which contained the bride. Some who had more time to spare turned into the church, which had already quite a congregation of sightseers and grandly-dressed relatives and friends.

But there were also some folk who were not fine at all. There were many of them decidedly shabby; and the wonder was, what brought them there. They went there for the best of all reasons, because they were invited; though they formed a strange contrast to the company that surrounded them, in silks and satins. They were the poor people of the bride's district, and the members of her Sunday class. For, though the bride was young, and lived in a grand house, and could (if she liked) have fared sumptuously every day, yet she lived not for herself alone, but shared both what she knew and what she had with the poor, by whom she was much loved.

One of the poor women had brought her little child with her. Perhaps she could not have left it at home, or it may be that, when she talked of the bride in after-life, she wished to be able to say to her child, "And you, too, were at the dear lady's wedding." But the babe was not equal to the occasion, and began to talk in its own fashion, which, though it was no very great harm, was still, in the eyes of the beadle, a delinquency which could not be passed by. "Take that child out of the church," said the important man. But the woman made no movement to obey. "Take that child out at once, or else it shall be done for you." But the important man was met with an answer he did not expect, and which left the mother and baby unmolested for the remainder of the service. "I was invited here," said the poor woman; "and, if the bride knew the child was here, she'd be far more likely to take him on her knee than to turn him out." There was no answering that, and mother and babe kept possession to the end.—*Old Jonathan.*

Poet's Corner.

STAND UP FOR JESUS.

Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
Ye soldiers of the cross!
Lift high his royal banner;
It must not suffer loss.
From victory unto victory
His army doth he lead,
Till every foe is vanquished,
And Christ is Lord indeed.

Stand up, stand up for Jesus!
The solemn watchword hear;
If while ye sleep he suffers,
Away with shame and fear!
Where'er ye meet with evil,
Within you or without,
Charge for the God of battles,
And put the foe to rout!

Stand up, stand up for Jesus
The trumpet call obey,
Forth to the mighty conflict,
In this his glorious day.
"Ye that are men now serve him,"
Against unnumbered foes;
Let courage rise with danger,
And strength to strength oppose.

Stand up, stand up for Jesus!
Stand in his strength alone;
The arm of flesh will fail you,
Ye dare not trust your own.
Put on the gospel armour,
Each piece put on with prayer;
Where duty calls or danger,
Be never wanting there.

Stand up, stand up for Jesus!
Each soldier to his post;
Close up the broken columns,
And shout through all the host!
Make good the loss so heavy
In those that still remain,
And prove to all around you
That death itself is gain.

Stand up, stand up for Jesus!
The strife will not be long:
This day the noise of battle,
The next the victor's song.
To him that overcometh
A crown of life shall be;
He with the king of glory
Shall reign eternally.

Teachers' Column.

PRIVATE SPEAKING TO SCHOLARS.

I HAVE just read with much pleasure your remarks in the "Teacher's Column" for March (p. 66), about speaking *plainly* to the children about the love of Jesus.

I have been connected with a Ragged School for some years now, and I can truly say that it is alone by the advice you give that the affections of the little ones can be won, and brought to love the precious name of Jesus. I find that by making myself acquainted with their characters, dispositions, and tempers, I obtain such influence over them, that they gladly come to me with all their little sorrows, grief, and joy.

It is by thus making myself a child, bringing myself down to them, that the influence is won, which I trust time will never destroy.

I think, if Ragged School teachers were to visit or manage to see the children more frequently, the Lord would bless them more in their own souls, and the children would look with love upon those teachers who they saww ere most earnest for their salvation. If teachers and scholars met oftener, what great and blessed results would follow when they met on Sabbath days! and many more would be brought to acknowledge the all-atoning blood of Him who died for our sins, and who now is waiting for the souls of those committed to our charge.

Barnsbury. J. A.

WATCHED BY OUR CLASSES.

CHILDREN are acute observers, and none are more able or ready to compare and contrast their teacher's theory and practice. If they see that his conduct is inconsistent with his teaching, he will fail to ensure their affection, and to win their confidence. The salutary influence which his instruction is calculated to exert, will be more than counteracted by the faults which his juvenile critics will instinctively detect.

The teacher must be candid and truthful in all that he says, and all that he does. His conduct must be consistent and transparent. The purity of his motives should never be open to suspicion. The children ought to be able to look upon him as the living embodiment of sincerity and honour. "When once a child," says Miss Edgeworth, "detects you in falsehood, you lose his confidence; his incredulity will then be as extravagant as his former belief was gratuitous. It is in vain to expect, by the most eloquent manifestoes, or by the most secret leagues, offensive and defensive, to conceal your real views, sentiments, and actions from children. Their interest keeps their attention continually awake; not a word, not a look, in which they are concerned, escapes them; they see, hear, and combine with sagacious rapidity; if falsehood be in the winds detection hunts her to discovery. 'Honesty is the best policy' must be,

the maxim in education, as well as in all the other affairs of life. We must not only be exact in speaking truth to our pupils, but to everybody else."

Bearing in mind that children are influenced by what they *see*, as well as by what they hear—and probably more by the former than the latter—teachers ought invariably to conduct their class so as to secure themselves from censure. They should always pursue the usual routine on the appearance of a visitor, and not suddenly change it in order that any defects of instruction may be concealed.

The influence of the teacher's candour, or of his disingenuousness, cannot be too highly estimated. Some appear to think that they lower themselves in their scholars' esteem by confessing their inability to answer some particular question, or to solve some peculiar problem, and in their strait they resort to the most paltry evasions. We have heard of a governess in a ladies' school who, being unable to answer a question put by a pupil, replied, "I am not disposed to gratify curiosity that has cost nothing, and therefore will not tell you to-day what you want to know, but if you can't this evening find it out for yourself, I will tell you to-morrow;" intending in the meantime to remove her own ignorance. Such a subterfuge may possibly succeed once or twice, but, in the long run, children will discover that their teacher is wanting in straightforwardness, and two evils will ensue; they will distrust his assertions, and their pure love of truth will be undermined. Let a teacher teach well what he *does* know, and frankly acknowledge his ignorance of subjects he does not understand, and he will gain in the end.

HEAVEN'S POLICE.

"Do you know the name you go by in the army?" said a gentleman to a colporteur who was engaged in his Christian labours among the French and German soldiers in France.

"No."

"We call you," he said, "heaven's police."

"A very honourable name," I replied; "how I wish I could at once arrest you in the name of my Master, and secure a place for you for ever in heaven!"—*Christian Work.*

Children's Gallery.

THE MISSIONARY MONEY-BOX.

A RICH lady was one day overtaken by a shower of rain, so sending her servant for a carriage, she took shelter in the cottage of a poor man. Having to wait a long time, she amused herself with looking at the contents of the little room in which she was seated, and among other things her eyes fell on a large money-box.

Being of a kind disposition, she said to a little pale-faced boy who was sitting by the fire, "Bring me your money-box, my lad, and I will give you something."

The boy's face was flushed as he rose and took the box to the lady; and he was still more pleased when he saw her about to put in a bright new half-crown.

But he suddenly looked up into her face, and said, "Do you know, ma'am, that this is a missionary box?"

"A missionary box," exclaimed the lady; "take it back, then, I do not wish to give money to missions; and if I make you a present of this half-crown, you must promise me that you will not put a penny of it into that box."

"I cannot promise that, ma'am,"

said he, firmly. "Father and mother and I always put part of all the money we get into the missionary box, and after all it is little enough."

"And how came this thought into your heads?" asked the lady; "for I am sure you never heard anything about missionaries in this little village."

"No, ma'am, we never did; but I bought a book one day of a pedlar, and it was full of such wonderful stories about the doings of the heathen in far-off countries, that I did not believe they could be true. However, when father read it, he said it was true enough; for he had been a soldier, and had travelled in those very places. So then I asked if I could do something to help them, and mother said we might have a box, and put in all the pence we could spare, the same as they used to do at the Sunday School to which she went once. So father made this box, and we agreed that we would all put in a part of what we earned."

"And what will you do with the money when the box is full?" asked the lady.

"I don't know, ma'am," answered the boy, with a puzzled look; "but we could get another box, and fill that."

The lady smiled and said, "Can you think it a duty to deny yourselves for such a purpose?"

The boy looked surprised, but answered, "After all that God has done for us in giving his only Son to die for our sins, don't you think, ma'am, that we from love ought to try to do something for him?"

Just then the lady's carriage came to the door, but before leaving she put the half-crown into the missionary box, saying, in a laughing manner, "I hope it may do good."

Many weeks passed away. One bright sunshiny day the lady again entered the cottage where she had once taken shelter, but this time she was the bearer of good news. Since her last visit she had taken to read missionary books, and God led her to see the importance of missions, and inclined her heart to help them. So she had spoken to the clergyman and to some other people in the village of Fernleigh, and the result was that they were going to have a missionary meeting and a missionary society among themselves.

From that time the lady not only became a zealous supporter of foreign missions, but she began to take pleasure in all kinds of home missions.

Thus did God bless the example set by this poor but pious family. And thus will he assuredly bless all those who weary not in well-doing, for the promise is sure, "That in due time ye shall reap, if ye faint not." ELLA.

"LOOK AT ME NOW."

THE Dublin Ragged Schools are attended by a great many little children who, were it not for the great curse of almost every country—"drink"—would not be so badly off as they are. But these little children have so often been ministers of mercy to their fathers and mothers, that there is a goodly band of them whose names are enrolled in the Band of Hope, and the meetings held for it are very well attended.

A few months ago a little boy with a wizened countenance, and dressed in the worst of rags, began to attend. So careworn did he look that he was scarcely like a child; he might have been *any* age.

After a while, there began to be a gradual improvement in little Mike, and one day he appeared in a strong suit of clothes.

"Why, Mike," said the teacher, "how come you to be so smart to-day?"

Mike looked up with a beaming face and a twinkling eye. "Oh, sir, Daddy's a teetotaller," said he; "I never rested till I brought him here to the meetings, and he signed the pledge, and *look at me now*."

Editor's Note-book.

GATHER THE LAMBS.

The Bible is full of precepts and injunctions which, if men only obeyed, would confer illimitable blessings upon themselves and fellows. "Growth in grace," and "conversion of men," would then be phrases expressive of realisations more than of ideal good contemplated.

If the followers of Christ were faithful in their testimony at all times; if they used only one-seventh of their time in his service, there would be a greater extension of his kingdom, and fewer cries from the world of spuriousness of profession. We should not only statedly but always have the interests of his kingdom before us.

There are various spheres of usefulness in the church. There is work for all. There is very important work in the Ragged School. Who will feed and take care of the lambs in the flock? Who will gather in the stray ones to the fold? Who will guide the little ones in the paths of peace?

It is true the church is more awake to the importance of this field than formerly, and that the energies of large numbers are devoted to this work.

But are all the places filled? Is there no room for the young men and women to use their talents, and prove themselves worthy stewards? Yes, and for the old and middle-aged too. The operations of our Ragged Schools might be carried on upon a broader and more comprehensive scheme, if the sympathies and labours of all were enlisted in the work. There are many children in every large city, who might be rescued for eternity from the ways of wickedness, and placed under the influences of the Gospel, if only more individuals were to be found self-denying enough to search them out.

We need not go far to find a number large enough to fill many half-empty Ragged Schools to overflowing.

Let us work for the Master while it is called to-day.

PULL AT THE OAR.

The servants of Jesus are like rowers in a boat. They sit with their backs to the bow, and cannot see what lies ahead. But the helmsman at the stern is on the look-out, and he steers the boat whithersoever he wills. So in our godly undertakings we sit with our backs to the future. It is all unknown, untried, and impenetrable. We know not what the morrow may bring forth. But it is our business to pull at the oar of prayer and earnest labour. There is a Divine helmsman who sees the future, and who holds the rudder in his hand. We have only to commit our way to him and to pull at the oar of duty. This is trust. This is faith. This is the way that Paul pulled his boat towards Rome—not knowing or caring what stripes and imprisonments, or what triumphs of the gospel were awaiting him there. What a blessed thing it is that we cannot foresee the future? We might be so paralyzed by the perils, or the difficulties, or the sufferings before us, that we would drop the oars in despair. What a mercy it is that a mother does not know all that shall befall the child of her bosom? What a mercy that we ministers do not know what failures we have got to encounter during the year of labour on which we are just entering? Every true Christian toiler is continually "saved by hope." He pulls at the oar and trusts. —*Dr. Cuyler.*

SKIMMED MILK.

Good Mrs. —— once dreamed that a poor man came to her door and begged a drink of milk. Always ready to do a kindly deed, she hastened to the cellar, but, with housewifery thrift, was about to skim the milk before taking it to him, when a voice seemed to whisper in her ear, "Give him cream and all." For a moment there was an inward struggle. "Skimmed milk is good enough for a tramp like him," said selfishness; but the good angel conquered, and the great bowl covered with golden cream was carried to the thirsty beggar. If the good woman craved any reward for her generous deed, she had it at once in the poor man's grateful look as his brown hands grasped the tempting bowl, and it was with real regret that she waked to find it only a dream.

But the dream has a moral. How many of our best deeds are spoiled by having the cream taken off! The most princely gift, if given with an unloving heart, is, to the giver at least, nothing but skimmed milk; and the same is true of all good deeds done only from a sense of duty or for the praise of men. The lady who loads the little beggar at the door with the richest dainties of her table, but gives no loving smile or friendly word, gives, after all, but skimmed milk to the hungry child.

Love is the golden cream of all good deeds, and without it they are at best skimmed milk.—*Christian at Work.*

Correspondence.

MORAL POISON AND ANTIDOTE.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Sir,—Your reference (p. 146) to the popularity of thieves' serials is, alas! not exaggerated. Lord Shaftesbury, when at Glasgow, gave two confirmatory facts which I think it desirable for your pages to record. Unlike the social snarlers of this age his lordship never points out a social evil without also suggesting the appropriate remedy; so in this case, he not only spoke of this popular literary poison, but also pointed out the sole antidote.

Lord Shaftesbury gave a narrative of two lads, of thirteen and fourteen years of age, who were led to commit a burglary, with violence, through having read one of these corrupting penny papers that were so largely circulated in London. "The father of these lads was an honest, decent man, and who told his lordship that two better conducted lads it was not possible for a father to have until they got hold of bad papers. There was a shop in that city with a very fine front. On one part of it was the announcement that there were sold the works of the Religious Tract Society, and on another card the statement that there were sold all the tracts of the Christian Knowledge Society. A friend of his went in to buy some of these works, and, to his astonishment, he saw on the counter a vast collection of those very serials to which he had just been alluding. He said to the woman, who seemed to be decent, respectable, and well dressed, "My good woman, how is it possible you can be selling such things as these alongside the tracts of the Religious Tract Society and the Christian Knowledge Society? I was attracted by these into your shop." "Well," she said, "I will tell you the truth. I

confess I am ashamed of it, but the demand for them is so large that if I did not get a supply for those who come into my shop, I believe I should lose all my custom."

Well, then, how were we to meet this evil? This incident just showed that the love of mammon was so strong as to overpower every other principle. This woman knew that she was engaged in an illicit transaction, yet she said, "The profits I make are such that I must admit these tracts into contact with others, though I know their abomination." They had then nothing for it but the direct religious education of families; to do everything in their power to multiply colportage. They must have a great many works of a high moral and religious character, but they must be of various kinds. They must have narratives and works of fiction, such as were to be found in the "Leisure Hour" and the "Sunday at Home." Works of fiction they must have in some shape, for if they did not provide them in a good shape they might rely upon it that the disposition of the young would lead them to ge them in another.

If he went into a young man's library he would predict the state of his mind, his morality, and pursuits. Just as a man was known by the company he kept, so he was known by the books he read. He spoke this from experience. There was a statesman of the present day who had introduced more epigrammatic sentences than any other man living, who said, "Always have some great thought nurturing the mind." He said to young men, "Don't read too many books." As the health of a man's body did not depend upon the amount of food it ate, but the amount it digested, the vigour of a man's mind did not depend upon the number of books he read, but reading one or two and digesting them."

After facts like these can we hesitate to annex libraries to every Ragged School? For by this plan only can we expect the men and women of the future to shun the moral as they now shrink from physical poison. What thou doest then,—do *at once*.

Yours, &c.,

QUARTUS.

Facts and Scraps.

BIRMINGHAM WORKING MEN'S HOSPITAL.—Baroness Burdett Coutts recently laid the foundation-stone of the Working Men's Extension wing of the Queen's Hospital at Birmingham. A sum of £5,000 has been raised in three years by the periodical contributions of 20,000 workmen in the principal factories of the town. This is the first hospital in the kingdom erected by the contributions of working men. The large sum thus contributed may be regarded as so much money saved out of the pot-house.

SHOEBLACKS AND CHURCH BUILDING.—The North-Western Shoeblack Brigade has a home for forty boys. Hearing that a school-church was to be built near them, they quietly put their heads together to see what they could do in the matter, and soon afterwards handed over £7 as their contribution to the fund. When, in the following year, money for the erection of a permanent church was asked for they again set to work and sent in £3. Two splendid donations these when compared with the miserable

mites *squeezed* out of the pocket of many prosperous Christians.

LABOURERS' HOMES.—At the annual meeting of the Society for Improving the Condition of the Working Classes, it was stated that during the past year the entire mortality amounted only to twenty-four in an average population of 1,500. The George Street House, Bloomsbury, for 104 single men, had had an average of eighty-eight inmates. The Streatham Street House, Bloomsbury, for fifty-four families, had had an average of fifty-three. The Thanksgiving Model Buildings, Portpool Lane, for twenty families and 128 single women, had had all the houses and rooms let. The Hatton Garden House for fifty-four single men had had an average of forty-eight lodgers. The lodging-house in Charles Street, Drury Lane, for eighty-two single men, had had an average of eighty lodgers. The dwellings in Clark's Buildings, Broad Street, St. Giles's, had had an average occupation of seventy-six families. The houses in Wild Court, Drury Lane, had had an average of ninety-nine families. Tyndall's Buildings, renovated for thirty-six single men and eighty-seven families, gave a return of seventy families and thirty-two nightly lodgers.

RELIGION IN AMERICA.—The statistics of religion for the United States, just completed at the Census Office, show the total number of Church organisations, upon the 1st of June, 1870, to be 72,451, the total number of Church edifices to be 63,074, the total church accommodations to be 21,659,562, and the aggregate value of the Church property to be 354,459,581 dollars. The church accommodation for the principal denominations is as follows:—Baptist, regular, 3,997,116; Baptist, other, 369,019; Congregational, 1,117,212; Episcopal, 991,051; Lutheran, 997,332; Methodist, 6,528,209; Presbyterian, regular, 2,198,900; Presbyterian, other, 499,344. So much for that Christian "willinghood" which thinks it far "better to give than to receive."

ORPHAN WORKING SCHOOL.—One of the oldest and best managed Orphans' Homes is that called the "Orphan *Working* School." That it well deserves this epithet the following statement of the needlework done by the girls last year will fully prove. At the close of the last anniversary one of the girls rose and said:—Ladies and gentlemen, the work done in the Girls' School from the 1st June, 1871, to May 31st, 1872, is as follows:—Garments mended, 12,087; stockings mended, 17,028; dresses made, 157; pinafores made, 144; boys' shirts, 72; other articles, 1,709; making a total of 31,197.

WOMEN'S DRESS ASSOCIATION.—The following are the rules of this new and valuable society. (I.) Every member and associate must engage to dress modestly, neatly, and becomingly, the dress to be consistent with the occupation and position in life, and that cleanliness be scrupulously observed (II.) Never to buy anything merely because it is cheap, nor without paying for purchases at the time or when the account is sent in, and never to spend more upon dress than can be conscientiously spared for the purpose (of this each person must be her own judge). (III.) To avoid all waste of time in frequent changes or alterations of dress, and that dress or dressing shall in no respect whatever be permitted to infringe upon other and higher duties. (IV.) To avoid all exaggerations (especially of head-dresses) and however they may be encouraged by the popular fashion, all unsightly articles of dress which interfere with the natural figure, or anything which might attract improper attention. (V.) No member or associate to wear any unhealthy [such as tight-lacing, high heels, poisonous materials, &c., disputed questions to be decided by the National Health Society, which has kindly consented to act as referee to this association], style of dress, or anything which cripples natural action or exercise.

POST-OFFICE SAVINGS-BANKS.—A Par-

liamentary return gives an account of the business transacted in the year 1870 at every post-office savings-bank in the United Kingdom. There are several post-office banks in England with deposits exceeding £50,000; and the bank at the head post-office at Birmingham has deposits exceeding half a million sterling, although there are several other post-office banks in that town. The deposits in the post-office banks in Middlesex, including the "city" of London, amounted at the close of 1870 to no less than £2,728,634; in Surrey, to £1,084,860; in Kent, £1,011,893; in Warwickshire, £925,791; in Lancashire only £899,345; and in all Yorkshire only £613,566. The post-office banks appear to be, to a considerable extent, used for other purposes than that of permanent investment of savings, for about a third of the entire deposits held was withdrawn in the year, and at many post-offices one-half. In the whole United Kingdom £6,333,082 was added to the deposits in 1870, and £4,758,187 was withdrawn. The net increase of deposits in the year was £1,399,728 in England, £46,007 in Wales, £37,488 in Scotland; £88,716 in Ireland, £2,911 in the Channel Islands—making a total increase of £1,574,895 in the amount of deposits. At the close of the year 1870 there were 1,072,953 depositors' accounts open in the English post-office banks, and sums amounting to £13,727,450 were due to the depositors; in Wales 30,646 depositors, and £403,398 due to them; in Scotland 39,033 depositors, and £304,235 due to them; in Ireland 38,279 depositors, and £633,000 due to them; in the Channel Islands 2,242 depositors, and £31,021 due to them—making a total of 1,183,153 depositors, and £15,099,104 due to them.

CRIME IN LONDON. — Indictable offences show a decrease in 1871 of 2,219 below those of last year; while the total number of apprehensions made by the police was large, being 71,961 in 1871, against 71,269 in 1870. The assaults on the police continue to increase. Many of them were serious; and the police pension list shows that at the present time there is a large annual charge on police funds for pensions to men of the police force injured on duty. A temporary augmentation to their numbers of 20 detectives was made during the winter months, and a system of patrols was organised in the districts most exposed to the depredations of thieves, and with markedly good results. The apprehensions made under the Poor-law and the Vagrant Acts have been 3,568, about the same as last year. The system of fixed points, where a police-constable can always be found, has now been fully recognised by the public as supplying an acknowledged want. There are now 207 such points in the metropolis, and they are increased from time to time as necessity arises.

Notices of Meetings.

SHAFTESBURY PARK, WANDSWORTH ROAD.

On Saturday, August 3, the memorial stone of the model dwelling-houses to be erected for working men was laid by the Earl of Shaftesbury on the Shaftesbury Park Estate, Lavender Hill, Wandsworth Road. The estate, which is close to the Clapham Junction and Wandsworth Road railway stations, consists of forty acres, on which it is intended to erect 1,200 dwellings, with buildings for schools, lecture-room, library, club, co-operative stores, wash-houses, and

baths. Three acres are to be reserved for garden and recreation ground.

Mr. Baxter Langley having explained the objects of the company, introduced the Earl of Shaftesbury, who proceeded to lay the memorial stone, which bore the following inscription:—"Happy homes, the best condition of social progress. This stone was laid by the Right Hon. the Earl of Shaftesbury, K.G., for the Artisans' and General Dwellings Company (Limited), on the 3rd August, 1872." Having performed the customary ceremony, the noble earl said that he could not separate without a few words of thankfulness and congratulation that they had met that day for such a worthy purpose. They had founded that day a workmen's city, and had founded it on the very best principles—the principles of self-help and independence. Most heartily did he wish for himself and in the name of hundreds of thousands of his fellow-countrymen that the blessing of God might rest upon the work they had that day inaugurated. He liked the principles they had laid down for their guidance. They had excluded public-houses and the tap-room; they had dealt with them as the people of old dealt with the lepers—they put them outside the camp. In the intellectual amusements to be provided he hoped their good wives and daughters would not be excluded, for they would find there was no good social progress without the aid of the female sex. If the woman floated, she floated like the cork, and dragged the man after her. He was happy to see that they were going to maintain the working-man as the head of a moral and industrious family, and he would urge them to hold fast to the great family social relations. That would be the first step in the prosperity of the city, as it was the grand security of empires. He was delighted to find that there was to be a recreation ground in the centre of the city for the children in which they could enjoy themselves. This would be a vast improvement on the pot-house and the "penny gaff." For more than thirty years he had been engaged in advocating the improvement of the domiciliary condition of the people, but it was not by charity the work could be effected. It must be done by their own hands and hearts. They must say, "We are Christians, and will live like men."

GOSPORT.

The annual meeting of this Ragged School and Bethel was held last month. Major-General Burrowes presided.

The Report stated that 70 boys and 130 girls are taught in the Day Schools. Each schoolroom is used on Sunday evenings for special services for children and adults. These meetings are largely attended by the right class.

In addition to these operations a novel plan has been adopted to reach sailors in the harbour or on board ships off Portsmouth. A boat, manned by ragged scholars, under Mr. Cook the superintendent's direction, visits these ships with a view to distribute Bibles and tracts and deliver Gospel addresses. These labours of love are highly prized both by British and foreign tars.

The chairman expressed a strong hope that Parliament, in dealing with the education of the people, would allow Ragged Schools to be conducted in the same manner as hitherto, so that poor destitute children might learn the Word of God. In America religious education was separated from secular, and though the children were taught very well in secular matters, very little religious teaching was given. The other feature of Mr. Cook's work which particularly interested him was that which he carried on among the merchant seamen of the port. They were so often absent from their homes and so rarely went to church, that the method adopted by Mr. Cook with his Bethel ship, appeared to be the only means of which they could be told of Christ crucified.

CHEQUER ALLEY.

The annual meeting of the friends and supporters of this interesting mission station took place in Hare Court Hall, St. Paul's Road, on Wednesday evening. The chair was occupied by Mr. J. Candlish, M.P.

The Report, which was read by Mr. James Smith (the Secretary), gave an outline of the work which is carried on, and we make the following extracts:—"Chequer Alley is about ten minutes' walk from the heart of the city. It is inhabited by extremely poor families, and all the characteristics of poverty are to be found amongst them. Ignorance, crime, and disease are rampant. The houses are overcrowded, ill ventilated, and deficiently supplied with air and water—two of God's best and cheapest gifts. Children grow up under influences, physical and moral, which make it almost certain that the worst part of their nature only will be developed, and that years will inevitably transform them into men and women with the least possible amount of virtuous tendency and the largest possible amount of vicious propensity. The older people, having been reared in this or some other similar nursery, are thriftless, thoughtless, unhopeful, living only in the present, and almost incapable of looking far, either behind or before them. The Committee, impressed with the conviction that much of the misery of such neighbourhoods might be prevented, that it is the duty of the strong to help the weak, and that it is neither safe, nor manly, nor Christian to leave them unhelped, have carried on their operations in Chequer Alley for many years past with more or less success. To encourage forethought and economy they have established a Savings' Bank and a Loan Fund. In the former 617 depositors have paid in £168 9s. 2d., in 4,460 payments. To develop faculty in mothers, they have established a Mothers' Meeting, presided over always by a member of the ladies' committee, at which the art of cutting out and making garments is taught. Seventy-two mothers connected with this meeting subscribed £36 19s. 2d. for material, and made for their families 707 articles of clothing. A similar class teaches young girls to make their own clothes. The sickness and misery of the neighbourhood are to a small extent relieved by the visits of the female agent of the mission, or some of the members of the ladies' committee. The extreme poverty of the locality falling, especially in mid-winter, so heavily on young life, which ought to have warmth and food, has been partially relieved by free dinners given at a merely nominal price. Altogether, in Christmas dinners, soup dinners, and penny dinners, 6,093 dinners have been served to indigent children. The inability to enjoy any but the lower pleasures of life has been grappled with by the establishment of a Flower Show and Industrial Exhibition, by a course of winter evening Lectures and Entertainments, and by a Free Library. At the flower show 150 plants were exhibited, and various articles of needlework by the girls, and models by the boys. Finally, as regards agencies, impressed with the belief that religion is more important than all other things, inasmuch as it contains the germ of everything that is good and great in the individual and in society, your committee have carried on Sunday Schools, Sunday Evening Services, and Open Air Services, at which the simple truths of Christianity are simply stated. They have taken the "Golden Shears" public-house, to give cover to some of the agencies. The acquisition of this public-house is a benefit in another respect. Standing in close proximity to the Mission premises, it was, during its former occupancy, a great hindrance to our operations. It was the retreat of the worst characters of the locality, many of whom found it fine sport to scoff at those who came to the Mission services. In securing the premises, therefore, we at once remove a nuisance and acquire additional facilities for our work.

Papers, Original and Selected.

FIRST STEPS IN PUBLIC-HOUSE REFORM.

THE NEW LICENSING ACT.

We have never interfered with those political questions which have ever divided good men. The list of Vice-Presidents of the Ragged School Union shows how possible it is for true Christians to come to different conclusions on matters of government, and yet how practicable it is for men occupying opposite benches in the House of Lords to co-operate cordially in measures which tend to elevate the destitute or criminal classes. For, happily, however different the political stand-point, most true Christians can "see eye to eye," and so put shoulder to shoulder as to render every measure of social reform a success.

This fact became apparent last session as regarded the needed measures for public-house reform. Though introduced by the Government into the House of Lords, yet the Opposition leaders steadily supported the Bill, or it could not have passed; and in the House of Commons, men of the most opposite political leanings did their best to make the Bill a real improvement on the former plan of licensing. It needed, however, all the force of the Government—never so beneficial as when "paternal"—to overcome the opposition of the public-house interest on the one hand, and of the "Permissive Bill" party on the other.

Last year the combined opposition of those who thought the Bill went too far, and of those who thought it did not go far enough, frustrated the attempt of Mr. Bruce to place public-houses on a better footing. The fact that there are nearly 200,000 beershop keepers and publicans in England, shows what a mighty interest the Government had to contend against; and the readiness with which they subscribed £30,000 to defeat that Bill, shows what a capital they possess. But, happily, common sense has triumphed, and though the Bill introduced and the Act passed are based—as might have been anticipated—on a compromise, they contain the

germs of future good; in other words, we regard the new Licensing Act as the first step in public-house reform.

This Act is vigorously enforced, we are glad to say, not only in London, but throughout the provinces. Riots to impede its execution have been rife at Exeter, Reading, Reigate, and in other towns; but publicans and topers, and those "roughs" who are ever ready for an outbreak, have alone sought to set the Act at defiance. But, happily, more moderate men—even when they considered the hours of closing as too stringent—have done their best to give the new Act a fair trial; and thus, short as the period is since its enactment, it may be considered as a great success.

The following is an outline of the principal provisions of the new Licensing Act. We have divided it into four heads, as they comprise its leading or novel features, and the penalties entailed by not complying with its provisions:—

1. HOURS OF CLOSING:—In the City of London, or any parish subject to the Metropolitan Board of Works, or within four miles' radius from Charing Cross, on Sunday, Christmas Day, and Good Friday, during the whole day till one o'clock, and between three and six o'clock in the afternoon, and after the hour of eleven of the clock at night. But if situated beyond those places, on Sunday, Christmas Day, and Good Friday, during the whole day before the hour of half-past twelve (or, if the licensing justices direct, one) in the afternoon, and between the hours of half-past two (or, if one be the hour of opening, then three), and six in the afternoon, and after the hour of ten (or if the licensing justices direct, any hour not earlier than nine and not later than eleven) at night. On work-days, London public-houses may not open before the hour of six (or if the licensing justices direct, not earlier than five) in the morning, nor keep open after the hour of twelve (or if the licensing justices permit, not later than one) at night.

Any offence for keeping open may be endorsed on the licence. These provisions are not to exclude a person licensed from selling to *bonâ fide* travellers, or to persons lodging in his house. Nothing in this section precludes the sale at any time at a railway station of intoxicating liquors to persons arriving at or departing from such station by railroad.

It will be seen by these provisions that public-houses will open one hour later, and what is of still greater benefit, will close one hour earlier than heretofore; and thus the temple of Bacchus is

closed two hours per diem longer than hitherto. They will also be closed two hours longer on the Lord's day. But, in addition to this, a new and valuable provision has been introduced, namely, the issue of six-day licences at a reduced licensing rate. This valuable clause not only gives a premium on Sunday closing, but at the same time it precludes publicans from being liable to penalties for refusing to serve what are termed "*bonâ fide* travellers," a legal curiosity whom no one has ever been able to define. Already we understand that about forty public-houses in Islington have availed themselves of this boon; and there can be no doubt that many of the more respectable class of publicans, in all parts of the kingdom, will avail themselves of the great privilege of Sunday rest.

2. ADULTERATION.—This is a glaring and a growing evil. Though there is one public-house to every forty-five male adults, yet out of this proportion publicans could not make the splendid fortunes they make so speedily, were their liquors not drugged. Thus, in addition to poisonous narcotics, copperas is used to give a "head" to beer, and salt is added to provoke thirst. "Cabman's mixture," too, is a compound well known to that fraternity; and many public-houses are preferred by labourers simply because they can get "muddled" sooner, or at a cheaper rate, than at other public-houses in the district.

To meet this evil it is enacted that: "Any person who mixes or sells any liquor adulterated with coculus indicus, chloride of sodium (otherwise common salt), copperas, opium, Indian hemp, strychnine, tobacco, darnel seed, extract of logwood, salts of zinc or lead, alum, and any extract or compound of any of the above ingredients, or any ingredient deleterious to health, to be liable for the first offence to a penalty not exceeding £20, or to *imprisonment for a month*, with or without hard labour; and for a second or subsequent offence, £100, or *three months' hard labour*, and to be disqualified for a period not less than two years and not exceeding ten years," with other public exposure on such convictions. In order to test adulterations, any police constable, authorised in writing by the police authority so to do, or any officer of Inland Revenue, may procure samples of any intoxicating liquor from any person selling or keeping or exposing the same for sale. He may purchase or require the vendor to show him and allow him to inspect any vessel containing liquor, and to obtain samples of such intoxicating liquor on payment or tender of the value of such samples. The same to be analysed and proceedings adopted.

This introduces a novel principle—but one which we have often advocated in these pages—not merely to fine adulterators, but to send them to prison as felons. However palliated, adulteration is merely thieving under a softer name; but so long as the adulterator was only punished in pocket, and not in person, the fine was only laughed at, as it was readily paid out of the profits of adulteration, and the culprit escaped the public odium of being ranked with the felon class. But, with this provision, those who choose to drink malt liquors will probably get them as they come pure from the brewers, and not as manufactured in the cellar. We hope, too, that this new clause will put an end to that enormity, publicans' druggists, who now derive enormous incomes from this nefarious traffic.

3. DRUNKENNESS. — Valuable provisions are introduced to punish, and we trust eventually to check, this national vice. Thus any person found drunk is to be liable to penalties increasing from 10s. for a first to 40s. for subsequent offences. "If any licensed person permits drunkenness or any violent, quarrelsome, or riotous conduct to take place on his premises, or sells any intoxicating liquor to any drunken person, he shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding for the first offence £10, and not exceeding for the second and any subsequent offence £20." Drunkards can also be excluded from licensed premises. "Any such person who upon being requested, in pursuance of this section, by such licensed person, or his agent or servant, or any constable, to quit such premises, refuses or fails to do so, shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding £5; and all constables are required, on the demand of such licensed person, agent, or servant, to expel, or assist in expelling, every such person from such premises, and may use such force as may be required for that purpose." The Court committing any person to prison for non-payment of any fine, may order him to be imprisoned with hard labour. Already this clause has been enforced, and many notorious drunkards are now suffering in prison for this sin.

4. SELLING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN.—Chief among the benefits of this valuable Act is the way in which it tends to check that horror of horrors, *boy drunkenness*. There can be no doubt that the habit of undue drinking is fostered in childhood by foolish parents. Many times have we seen mothers give the drainings of the gin-bottle to mere babies. On one occasion, too, a boy attending a Ragged School in Westminster was drunk on Christmas Day.

On remonstrating with him, he told us that his father had given him half a pint of gin to drink, saying that "it is hard lines if a man can't get drunk once a year"! With a propensity thus early encouraged by wicked fathers, it is no wonder that sobriety is so rare among the labouring class. And, as if this were not enough, the large majority of publicans too readily minister to this depraved taste of mere children. Thus recently we read a notice in the window of a public-house near the city, "*Farthing* glasses of gin may be had here"!

But we may hope that such training for the drunkard's grave will soon come to an end. For one of the clauses of the new Licensing Act visits with an increasing penalty all who "sell spirits to any person apparently under the age of sixteen years."

Other clauses of equal value might be referred to. For example, there are severe penalties (even to forfeiture of licence) for keeping disorderly houses, harbouring thieves, or permitting gambling.

There are two defects, however, in this Act to which we would briefly refer, trusting that they may be rectified when it is amended.

Probably one of the most fertile causes of drunkenness—especially as regards young men and women—is to be discovered in the ease with which magistrates grant licences to public-houses for music and dancing. To most of these dens of iniquity the admission is free, for the crafty proprietors know too well that drugged liquors will more than repay the fees of those comic singers who are hired to entertain fools with grotesque costumes or silly attempts at wit. Young females now throng such places, and our midnight meetings tell too well the sequel, whilst many young men have found them as doors to hell.

Another defect is the hour of closing. The great drunkard's hours are between ten and twelve in the evening. Surely no reasonable person—not even a publican—could object to so curtail the hours of closing as to put up the shutters at eleven. Those inveterate topers, too, called "landlords' friends" should be rigidly excluded at whatever hour the house is closed, or a loophole will be left which will prove destructive to one of the most valuable portions of this measure.

We have thus referred to the new Licensing Act, because we think that whatever tends to social improvement materially aids Ragged School managers, and may eventually render them no longer needful. We admit that, in themselves, such measures are

not religion, and can never be a substitute for the Gospel. Yet, even if nothing else is effected, they serve at least to "gather out the stones" which impede, if they do not directly prevent, more spiritual labours. For we are sure that our work amongst what Dr. Chalmers called "the lapsed classes" would prove even a greater success than heretofore, if we had not to contend with bad homes and still worse social habits. May, then, the new Licensing Act be but as a first step in those social reforms without which any political reform, however valuable in its place, can prove only "a mockery, a delusion, and a snare"!

CHRISTIAN UNION.

BY THE REV. PHILIP SCHAFF, D.D., NEW YORK.

UNION among Christians is becoming more and more an imperative necessity if they are to conquer in the great conflict with infidelity and Antichrist. "United, we stand; divided, we fall;" is an old and well-tried maxim. "Divide and conquer," has always been the policy of a successful enemy. "When bad men combine," said one of the wisest of British statesmen, "the good must associate, else they will fall, one by one, an unpitied sacrifice in a contemptible struggle." This is as true of religion as of politics.

But union is not to be sought merely as a means to an end and for the temporary purpose of gaining a victory over a foe. It is to be sought for its own sake, and as a lasting good: it is an essential attribute, and will be its crowning glory and joy, of the Church.

Christian union cannot be enforced or artificially manufactured. It must grow spontaneously from the soil of Christian freedom. It must proceed from the mighty Spirit of God, which is a Spirit of communion. It must rest on the vital union of individual believers with Christ. The closer Christians are united to Christ, their living Head, the closer they will be united to each other.

Union is no dead uniformity, but implies variety and full development of the various types of Christian ideas and discipline, as far as they are founded on constitutional differences, made and intended by God himself, and as far as they are supplementary rather than contradictory. It does not require an amalgamation of existing organisations into one, but may exist with their perfect independence in their own spheres of labour. It is as far removed from indifference to denominational distinctions as from sectarian bigotry and exclusiveness. It is quite consistent with loyalty to that particular branch of Christ's kingdom with which we are connected by birth, regeneration, or providential call. The Church of God on earth is a spiritual house with many stories, and each story has many apartments; to be in this house at all, we must occupy a particular room, which we are bound to keep in order and adorn with the flowers of Christian graces. But what should

hinder us to live on the best terms of courtesy and friendship with our neighbours and brethren who occupy different apartments in the same temple of God, who love and worship the same Christ, who pray and labour as earnestly as we for the glory of our common Master and the salvation of souls, and with whom we expect to spend an endless eternity in the many mansions of heaven? Why should we not bless those whom God blesses, why not rejoice in the prosperity of their works, though they bear a different name and pursue a different method?

Let Episcopalians, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, and all other Christians, of whatever name, be true to their time-honoured standards of faith and practice, honestly fulfil their own mission, and do as much good as they can in their own way. There is abundant room for usefulness for all in this vast and ever-expanding field of labour—only let them disown and abhor the selfish, narrow, and uncharitable spirit of sectarian exclusiveness. Rather let them subordinate their denominational peculiarities to the general interests of Christ's kingdom; let them cheerfully and thankfully recognise Christ's image in all its reflections, rejoice in the conversion of every soul, no matter by whose instrumentality it is brought about, and lend a helping hand to every effort to spread the glory of Him who died for all and liveth evermore.

CROYDON RAGGED SCHOOL.

Amongst the country Ragged Schools affiliated to the Ragged School Union, one of the best worked is planted in a byway of Croydon. We have visited it on several occasions, and always with pleasure; for it was evident that the teachers had their hearts in the work, and thus their efforts to socialise and save the waifs and strays of that town have not been abortive.

This school is planted in Hill Street, Old Town, a spot which was selected for the purpose nearly twenty-four years ago. On Sundays and week-days it trains for time and eternity about 250 scholars. They are all of the right class; and any visitor sees at a glance that the school consists of those whose parents cannot easily pay a small school fee.

The managers give three reasons for keeping on the *Day* School, viz.:—

First—It is the only school in Croydon that is free. There are numbers of poor people, especially widows, who are really unable to pay, or to whom the school-fees for their children would be, at least, a serious burden on their slender resources. Being not devoid of delicacy of feeling, it is no small boon to many of them to be spared the periodical appearance before the School Board or its officials, which is necessary in order to get school-fees remitted.

Secondly—A large proportion of the children in daily attendance are infants of quite a tender age, some as young as fifteen months. They come in charge of elder brothers and sisters, and many remain at the school the whole day. The school thus serves as a kind of *crèche*. The mothers are able to go out to their work, the younger children are taken care of and

instructed according to their capacity, and the elder ones, no longer kept at home "to mind the baby," are free to attend school.

Thirdly—It is attempted to realise the true idea of education, which is to draw out the powers of the *whole man*, moral and intellectual, in such a manner as best to fit him to fulfil his duties to himself and his fellows. It had been pointed out in previous reports, that many of the children come from homes where morality is at a very low ebb. To such children moral training, which alone influences the character, is of course more important than mental; and therefore, true morality being impossible apart from Christianity, religious instruction occupies the first place in the Ragged School system, secular the second.

But the managers add, that "whilst anxious to carry out the principles on which the school was founded, and to benefit to the utmost the class for whom it was designed, they do not conceal from themselves or their subscribers that there are difficulties to be encountered. The peculiarities of the class of population from which the children spring, the desultory attendance, and the number of infants, make it no easy matter to satisfy the requirements of the Education Department, which applies but one rule and standard to all schools, however diverse their character. Still, they hope soon to overcome these obstacles. The moral influence of the School Board has already been felt, and a more regular attendance is the result; and the advice of their visitors, readily accorded, will be of much use in points of detail."

This school, we are glad to intimate, is not only educational, but industrial, for the little girls do needlework, and the boys make paper bags and print the purchaser's name upon them, getting paid for their labour. The master's recompense is found in the willingness and unmistakable gratitude of the children, who take delight in everything they do. "You see, sir," said the master, "their heart is in the work." Upwards of a million paper bags are made and sold annually. All these have to be cut out by the master, otherwise the loss in paper would be immense; and after he has set the type, the boys work "at press" and print the customers' names and addresses. For this work, as we have before observed, the boys receive the proceeds—as much as £14 6s. 5d. having been paid to the boys for their labour last year.

This school, like all Ragged Schools, has its drawbacks. Too many parents care less for their children than the Master of the Ragged School, and frequently are the pupils absent—kept away to help their fathers at work before they are old enough to learn how to play. Some, too, are allowed to run about the streets rather than be sent to school, so that they may be handy "to fetch the beer"!

Though the rules of the school do not admit children of parents who can afford to pay for some sort of education, the master exercises his discretion, and makes an exception to the children of parents whose intemperance renders them unfit to be the guardians of their little ones. For these the master stretches the rule, and widens his door to squeeze through these poor little outcasts, and so saves them, body and soul, in the truest sense of the term. Such philanthropy has been known to do double good, for the little things take home hymns and books, which, trifling in themselves, are even utterly unknown to the dissolute parents, and, by degrees, the parents are brought

to listen to their children's efforts; and instances are known where the reformation of the parent dates from such unconscious teaching of their ragged child.

Nor is the religious element forgotten, but rather has that prominent place, week-days and Sundays, which has made Ragged Schools such a powerful missionary agency in the byways of London.

The Sunday School has been well attended, but the staff of teachers is far too small for the number of children. That last offshoot of our movement, the "Children's Church," is most successful. About one hundred who are present every Sunday morning, join in a simple service adapted to their capacity, and listen to a plain exposition of the Word of Life.

The report for 1872, detailing as it does an outline of the Institution's workings, tells us what it has done, and what it yet hopes to do. It tells all this and much more of a work well done, because done in simple obedience to the command of our common Lord, "Feed my lambs."

A WORKMAN'S CITY.

We had intended to refer more fully to Lord Shaftesbury's new experiment, namely, the founding of a Workman's City at Lavender Hill (see *ante*, p. 214); Lloyd's newspaper, however, renders this unnecessary by the following sketch, which lucidly gives the philosophy of this new movement. The writer says that—

"The Paradises modelled on penitentiaries, which are too generally considered the Omega of all that can be planned for the physical bettering of the poor, are not too popular among the classes for which they are designed. The badge of poverty is rather too obvious on their frontage; their situations are seldom wisely chosen; and their internal disposition and appearance suggest vivid ideas of a uniform for the inmates, and a set of Draconian rules for the guidance of their lives. They are, indeed, as a rule, the missing link between the prison and the workhouse. The philanthropist pervades them. It is not impressed on their inhabitants that they pay rent, like rich men, and owe nothing save a certain amount of gratitude to the well-intentioned projectors, who conceived the first idea of the model dwelling-houses. It is rather kept before the working man, that to lodge in such a model establishment is to accept a species of charity—to make a good bargain out of the pity and benevolence of the seller. These are not inducements to enter even a paradise; and it is not surprising that most of the modern English modifications of Fourier's phalanstere are not remarkable for the eagerness with which they are occupied by the labouring classes.

But the principle of this mode of benefiting the community of the poor, suffers no damage from the fact that it has hitherto been imperfectly acted upon. The mode yet remains one of the best, because the most practical devised in modern times. The applications it will suffer are innumerable, and contain, in all probability, among their number, the single plan that will give to the masses light, air, cleanly and pleasant houses, at a rate that shall be within the means of the poor, and yet remunerative to the projectors.

The Workman's City, whereof the first stone was laid by Lord Shaftesbury, is one of the applications of the modified phalansterian method, which, though susceptible of improvement in several respects, contains, on the whole, more promise of happy results, because more proofs of careful and liberal study than any similar experiment made for many years past.

The city—it will be a real city, numbering 1,200 dwellings, when completed—is to be erected on the Shaftesbury Park estate at Wandsworth which has become the property of Lord Shaftesbury's well-known company—the Artisans', Labourers', and General Dwellings Company. In the course of a certain number of years, and by means of the payment of a little surplus rent, each house in the projected city will become the property of its occupier. This arrangement immediately does away with the promptings of that shrinking pride, that turns the working man even from the misapplied Peabody Gifts. One cannot feel pauperised, when one is in the act of purchasing the house one rents. Then the city will be self-contained, self-sufficient—not the usual conglomeration of dark, angular buildings, where one can but eat and sleep. A lecture-room will be provided, with a recreation ground, co-operative stores, libraries, and reading-rooms. With these facilities for decent home amusement and instruction, domesticity in the new city need not be very hard to bear. Lastly, public-houses will be rigorously excluded from the precincts of the workmen's city.

All this, as Lord Shaftesbury wisely reminded his audience, has been done by working men for working men. The counsels, the encouragement of well-wishing members of other classes, have not been wanting—Lord Shaftesbury's presence proves it; but the material foundation of the new city has been laid on the principles of self-help and entire independence. Therefore, all that is remarkable in the plan of the undertaking, and the little, half-unwritten code for the guidance of its future inmates, is to be ascribed to the working men themselves, not to their protectors. Minor provisions, which would have been perfectly unimportant had they been prompted by aristocratic philanthropy, become very eloquent signs of progress, when they are known to have emanated from the classes for whose social and material improvement they are designed. It is perfectly simple, and what was to be expected, that the West-end 'poor man's friend,' having a well-stocked cellar at home, should put down the public-house with a stamp of a foot—swollen with gout perhaps; but that the artisans and labourers themselves should prescribe it within the limits of the city they are about to build, is somewhat more strange, and infinitely more encouraging. They have put the lepers 'outside the camp' at Wandsworth, as Lord Shaftesbury said. The highest moral influence of the model city, however, will not spring from the absence of pothouses. Public opinion—a power little felt by the migratory urban workman—must here exercise full sway. The child that does not attend the schools provided will be a marked child—marked and shunned; the man who prefers the pothouse to lecture or reading-rooms will be known and discarded; unless the city starts with a majority of reprobates, this public influence cannot but prove most beneficial. And with the daily growing certainty that he will, at a date more or less remote, be possessed of an interest in the community—of a stake in the country, it is not to be

doubted that the working man will grow less and less disinclined to break the ties that link him to the little workman's city; will grow more careful of his means, of himself, and of those who are to come after him.

In these ways, among many others, may the workmen's cities become useful, not only to their inhabitants, but as examples to others without their gates. In the point of sanitary improvement this result must be obvious. When workmen's trains run three or four times a day on every line (and no superhuman effort would be necessary to attain this) there is no reason why groups of strong, wholesome, comfortable houses should not be found in every suburb around London—no need why the reeking centre of the metropolis should not be relieved of half its squalid and miserable population. And the results of such changes would be felt as far as the English flag has penetrated, for, as Lord Shaftesbury says—

'There is nothing so economical as humanity. Whatever it may cost at the outset, good air, good water, and no overcrowding in close, noisome rooms, will be found the most economical and best means of developing the physical and moral energies which God has given to you. The domiciliary condition of the people involves health, comfort, and happiness. It involves also contentment; and people who are contented always give a government less trouble than those who are not. When men are contented they become excessively reasonable, and employer and employed find that their interests are identical. They must hold together, and by united action give force to progress.'

And such health, comfort, and happiness—such contentment, and reason, and united action, are things which, though they have never yet been tried, would, we may be sure, change the vital conditions of more than one quarter of the globe."

BARCELONA MISSION SCHOOLS.

From a letter of the Rev. Luther H. Gulick, of the American Board of Missions, we are glad to learn that the work of Christian education is spreading in that Paradise of Popery, Spain.

The work in Barcelona, especially, is of great interest as regards the education of children, more being gathered into Christian schools there and in its immediate suburbs than in any other city of Spain. It appears that 1,200 children are collected into these schools. Thus Mr. Empaytez, of Switzerland, supported by a committee in Lausanne, has two chapels, and over 200 children under instruction; Mr. Brown, English Wesleyan, has three chapels and about 300 children; and Messrs. Fenn and Payne have seven schools, attended by about 700 pupils. These latter schools held their annual examination in July, and it was of great interest to see the evidence so many hundreds of children gave that they had imbibed something of Scripture truth—something that must act as leaven in the sad mass of ignorance and sin of that benighted land.

At present, adopting the English Ragged School principle which has proved so successful at home, all these schools are, we are glad to say, free. We trust that this plan will not be abandoned, as it would be tantamount to

casting the bulk of these 1,200 children—many of them social waifs and strays—upon the streets, and away from all Gospel influences.

The Night Schools for adults are also a very interesting phase of the missionary work of Messrs. Brown, Fenn, and Payne. The Bible is made the text-book, and the Gospel is taught as far as it can be in an hour and a half. Mr. Payne, in Gracia, has an adult Night School now numbering a hundred pupils. The priests have tried starting Night Schools, but without success.

As in England, it is very noticeable, as regards work in Barcelona and its vicinity, that adults are with difficulty, and in but small numbers, drawn to hear the Gospel. Mr. Empaytez is more successful than any other in this line of effort; but his Sabbath congregation does not average more than forty.

May our beloved brethren so succeed with the young as eventually to gospelize this, the most chivalric people in Europe.

THEATRE SERVICES.

THE Report of the Theatre Services just issued is full of incidents showing how they reach classes who are "conspicuous by their absence" from the ordinary places of worship. As the winter course is about to begin, we pray that the dew of the Spirit may rest as heretofore upon both preachers and congregations.

During the past year the committee are able to report that 231 services have been held, attended by about 158,000 persons, making in all from the commencement of this effort, 1,885 services, attended by 2,386,100 persons.

During the past winter the committee, having regard to the "great increase of infidelity among the people," and to the fact "that large numbers of men are going about who have sufficient powers of oratory and sufficient command of facts to deceive people who are only too ready to be deceived," arranged with Mr. B. H. Cowper, who is qualified in a high degree for this work, for the delivery of several addresses at the different buildings engaged for these services, in support of the evidences of the Christian religion, with the view of counteracting in some measure these aggressive efforts. These addresses attracted in many cases large audiences, and were the means of removing objections and prejudices which had previously existed.

The *Nonconformist* gives the following sketch of a somewhat similar service, but which is principally attended by the lower sections of the middle class. Unlike the services intended for the destitute or criminal classes, which meet on the evening of the Lord's day, the service which attracts about 1,500 persons every Sunday to the Agricultural Hall, Islington, meets in the afternoon.

Among the preachers were the Earls of Cavan, Dalhousie, Kintore, and Shaftesbury.

The writer says that—"Acquainted as we are with the neighbourhood, it does not surprise us to find the crowd besieging the Islington Green entrance to the Agricultural Hall on Sunday afternoon, to be composed principally of shopkeepers and the better class of artisans, with a plentiful sprinkling of

clerks and tradesmen's assistants. The very poorest classes are scarcely to be seen here. In a few moments the gates are opened, and, proceeding with the crowd through a long narrow passage, we find ourselves—not in the Agricultural Hall itself, but in a large and commodious concert-room, capable of holding between two and three thousand persons, and having a spacious gallery and stage.

There is no favouritism displayed in the admission to the seats. The first comers, whoever they be, get the best places. In fact, everybody is treated on equal terms. At first the arrivals are somewhat straggling, but at about a quarter past three the stream becomes thick and continuous. The great majority of visitors evidently belong to "the respectable" classes. Many possess an extremely well-to-do appearance. Chignons of the most approved fashion are not uncommon, nor are gold chains and kid gloves infrequent. But mixed up with these are to be seen a considerable number of shabby coats and dilapidated shawls, which speak of bitter poverty and habitual suffering. Still, the general appearance of the multitude is very different from that to be witnessed at the Sunday evening theatre services in Whitechapel or Hoxton. There are no 'roughs.' The costermonger element is wholly absent. Shopkeepers, shop assistants, clerks, milliners, superior mechanics, and others of a similar grade in life, appear to constitute the majority. A considerable percentage are also evidently regular chapel-goers. In some cases, entire families are present, nor are mothers, with babies in their arms, wanting. Indeed, not the least curious or suggestive feature of the gathering is its family-like aspect. A stranger instinctively feels himself "at home" the moment he has secured a seat. Another characteristic feature is the large number of our Scottish brothers and sisters who are present. Had the service been one especially intended for them they could not have congregated in larger numbers. Respectably attired, healthy-looking, and orderly in demeanour, they give a certain "tone" to the meeting.

The success of these services, taken in conjunction with those at the various metropolitan music-halls and theatres, seems to present certain facts deserving the attention of those engaged in the good work of multiplying the number and usefulness of our places of worship. The principal attraction of the special services seems to consist in their really popular character. The seats are entirely free, there is no maintenance of class distinctions: rich and poor, employers and employed, being treated as equals. There is plenty of light and warmth. The hymns are of the simplest character, and sung to the easiest tunes. The chapters read from the Bible are explained in the clearest possible manner, no attempt at mere doctrinal teaching or theological partisanship being allowed. Lastly, the sermons or addresses are couched in plain English, such as every one—even the least educated—can understand. Fine language, hard words, and far-fetched metaphors are studiously avoided. Everybody can comprehend what is said, and understanding, they naturally feel interested. This is a lesson which ought to be studied much more closely than it hitherto seems to have been, for it evidently furnishes the long-desired clue which, properly followed up, might lead to our numerous places of Divine worship becoming more largely utilised than they are at

present. Is it possible that our existing system of church and chapel building, with its inevitable auxiliaries of close pews and reserved seats, can be a mistake? Why do the thousands of non-church and chapel-goers keep aloof from the regular places of worship, yet flock in crowds to the special Sunday services? Surely the question is one worth discussing."

These and similar facts show that the simple story of the Cross has not yet lost its ancient power. It was said of our Lord—however much he might be decried by Pharisee or Sadducee—that "the *common people* heard him gladly." So is it now, in these last days, when men have sufficient faith to testify of a full Christ for empty sinners anyhow and everywhere. What, then, is wanted, is not so much congregations as preachers so fully baptized with the Holy Spirit as to be constrained to echo the words of Paul, "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel!"

EMIGRATION HOME FOR DESTITUTE LITTLE GIRLS.

THE following are a few particulars of the work commenced in 1869 by Miss Rye, and which has been carried on by her since that date with so much success that she wishes to make the fact as well known as possible. There is hardly any limit to the demand for industrious, tractable children in the British dominions of North America, either as regularly-apprenticed servants or (to a smaller extent) as adopted children. The colonists prefer persons who emigrate when young, as they have so little to unlearn.

The children are taken by Miss Rye. They cross the Atlantic from Liverpool to Quebec by steamer, in parties of about 100 at a time, under the care of an experienced matron. From Quebec they travel inland to Niagara, a pleasant and healthy village in West Canada, about ten miles from the Falls, where Miss Rye has a house and grounds ready to receive them, and large enough to accommodate the whole party.

The Emigration Home for destitute little girls is situate in High Street, Peckham. Avenue House was opened on the 1st of December, 1869, and since that time 600 children (98 per cent. of whom were girls) have taken up their abode there for a time and have been passed on to their permanent situations or adopted homes. Many of these were sent from Ragged Schools.

The elder children are bound out to service till 18 years old on the following terms:—Up to 15 years of age they are fed, clothed, taught, and sent to a place of worship and Sunday School (if possible); from 15 to 17, instead of being clothed, they are paid 12s. a month wages; and from 17 to 18 (the last year of the apprenticeship) they receive 14s. a month wages. These benefits are secured to them by legal indentures binding the master to treat the child properly, and are entered into by him with Miss Rye and two Justices of the Peace for Canada. At the end of the apprenticeship the young women are free to make their own terms and choose their own employers. The duties expected from the children when young are usually very slight—often only playing and keeping company with the other children of the house.

The age of the children taken varies from 8 to 13, both inclusive, but in the case of a family of orphans Miss Rye does not refuse a sister a little older or

younger in order to prevent a separation. Not more than 10 per cent. of the total number are children of the younger age, and these are adopted by the families who take them; but out of the first party (numbering 73) that Miss Rye had in her Home, 17 were adopted as an own child.

The children are put out with members of the Church of England, Presbyterians, Wesleyans, Congregationalists, &c. Before any person is allowed to have a child, he or she has to answer the following questions to Miss Rye's satisfaction:—"What is your name? Give me your full address. Are you married? Is your wife alive? Have you any children, and how many? What is your trade or profession? How long have you lived in your present neighbourhood? Do you belong to the Church of England? and if not, state with what body of Christians you worship. Give me the names and addresses of two respectable persons who will speak for your character. If I commit an orphan to your care, state what position she is to hold in your family."

Eight pounds has to be paid to Miss Rye for each pauper child's passage money, and the necessary charge of the transit to the Home in Canada, and the expenses incurred while there. The children must be delivered free at Liverpool (the fare from London is 12s. 6d. for adults, and 6s. 3d. for children under 12) with an outfit, particulars of which can be obtained at this office.

Miss Rye supplies the following interesting facts and figures of her Emigration plan:—"Since I turned my attention to the emigration of children, thirty-six parishes—viz., Alverstoke, 3 parties; Stourbridge, 1; Walsall, 1; Portsea Island, 1; East Preston, 1; Sunderland, 2; Winchester, 2; Marlborough, 1; Birmingham, 1; Islington, 4; Kensington, 4; Bristol, 4; Wolverhampton, 2; St. Luke's, Chelsea, 3; St. George's Hanover Square, 5; Kirkdale, 4; Toxteth Park, Liverpool, 2; Fareham, 1; Reading, 1; Cheltenham, 1; Chichester, 1; St. Luke's, Holborn, 1; Bradford, Wilts, 1; Lewes, 1; Easthampstead, 3; Oxford, 2; Whitechapel, 1; Devonport, 2; Edmonton, 1; St. Saviour's, Surrey, 3; Chippenham, 1; Windsor, 2; Preston, 1; Cleobury Mortimer, 1; Newport, 1; Madeley, 1—have adopted my plan of thus providing for female pauper orphans or deserted children, and I believe are perfectly satisfied with the result. The opinion of the Local Government Board is shown by the fact that a circular letter for the guidance of guardians on the subject has been printed by order of the Board, and by their report of the work in 1871. A little collection of the children's letters, entitled, 'What the People think about the Children, and What the Children say about Canada' (Wade, Tavistock Street, Covent Garden), will also throw further light on the subject, and show how true I was in saying that—'Let the children whom we despise only get to the land where they are wanted, and we shall soon see a very mighty reformation in their appearance, habits, and general tone of mind and thought.' Thank God! our most sanguine expectations have been more than realised. Out of six hundred children taken into Canada, only seventy-four have been returned to the Home in the West as unmanageable—a remarkably small percentage when we remember some of their antecedents—and even these seventy-four children have been well replaced, and are now doing well.

I trust that if this paper should fall into the hands of any guardians of the poor, they will seriously consider the matter. We all admit that pau-

perism is becoming a vast canker which is feeding on the very life of the country. Now, I do not for a moment pretend to think that this little plan of mine for removing some of our superfluous pauper labour is likely to make any very great impression on the nation, but I do say that it is a step in the right direction. People say we have no servants now-a-days, but I answer, with a surplus of half-a-million of women in the country, surely there is raw material enough out of which to manufacture a sufficient number of servants to supply not only England but all Europe itself. The truth is, however, that our *should-be* working middle-class people are too grand to train and teach the girls whom our grandmothers turned into servants; so, as the raw material cannot train itself, what can be more natural, right, or proper than to take it to those thrifty and industrious women in our Canadas who will turn the same precious stuff to good account?

What English lady ever takes a pauper girl into her establishment? The thing is almost unknown. But in Canada some of the first families gladly consent to take one of these little ones by the hand, and guide, love, and train her.

But there are many children who never get even into a workhouse; and I have for some little time had it in my mind how I could gather in some of our *little* street girls—children from the lanes and the slums. At last the way has been made very clear. One kind friend gave me last year £500, and on the strength of that gift I have taken a nice large old-fashioned house in a populous neighbourhood; other friends have now come most handsomely forward, and the work is fairly started; we are furnished plainly, and as becomes the station in life our children will occupy, and we have gathered in about twenty-five little waifs varying in age from 7 to 14.

Fresh children are being brought to us every day, and more funds are of course needed, and if my fellow-workers will only realise the fact, that there are at least six homes for destitute boys to two such homes for equally destitute girls, and that, too, while we have nearly a surplus million of women in England. I am sure that my appeal for renewed support will not be in vain. We are specially requiring money just now to purchase some vacant land close to the Home, to prevent our being built in and surrounded by small tenements. Our hope is that the work may be established for generations to come, 'for the time will never come when relief will not be required for the miseries incidental to a concentrated population like that of England.' May He who wills not that one of these little ones should perish, incline some hearts to find out the children in their sorrow and send them here for shelter, and others to give of the abundance of their wealth, or of their poverty, as the case may be, so that I may not take my life in my hand and cross the great waters once more in vain, but find on my return that this gathering-in Home which I have been permitted to open and start has been blessed a thousandfold, and will be likely to prove a true Home to many thousands of our neglected little street girls."

Our prayer is that this effort to rid London of a class out of whom our wild arab females are manufactured may abundantly prosper.

HOW A THIEF-MAKER WAS SAVED.

A MIDDLE-AGED man of most dissipated habits, who lived by training young thieves, was a sad annoyance to the superintendent of one of the Ragged Schools in the East End of London. By cunning and duplicity this thief-maker managed to keep out of the grip of the law, and he gloried in setting at defiance the preachers of the Gospel. He proclaimed himself an infidel, and made his infidelity a cloak for his sensualism.

But the pious superintendent resolved that he would, through God's grace, seek this wicked man's conversion. He felt that nothing was impossible with God, and he had the faith which removes mountains of difficulties, and casts them into the sea. He sought to exercise this faith by combining the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove. His first care was to *find out* the *susceptibilities* of the *thief-maker's nature*. Case-hardened against reproof, it was ascertained that he could yet be moved by kindness, and that the power of music had been known to melt his savage heart to tenderness.

One Sabbath afternoon the superintendent was on the watch for the wicked man. He had come to know that he would pass down the lane where the school-house is situated about the time the school was being taught.

He stood in the doorway, and at length the thief-maker appeared. As he was passing the superintendent said, in very kindly tones, "Well, my good friend, and how are you to day?" The man stood stock-still. He could scarcely believe that one should address him thus. But he replied in few words, and was then about to pass on, when the superintendent gently put his hand on his shoulder, and said, "Now, my friend, I know you are very fond of music—I see it in your eye. Will you just step in and hear how nicely my boys sing?" He consented, and the superintendent placed him unobserved on the end of a seat near the door. He then called all to their seats, the lessons being just over, and a teacher gave out the beautiful hymn—

"Plunged in a gulf of dark despair,
We wretched sinners lay,
Without one cheering beam of hope,
Or spark of glimmering day."

As the melody rose in its pathetic power, the superintendent watched the effect on the countenance of the stranger. It was all he desired. Then, changing the subject, the children sang that beautiful and melting hymn—

"Oh, how He loves!"

While it was thus sung by more than a hundred voices, the superintendent seated himself quietly by the man, and, opening the Bible, asked, "Can you read?" "A little," was the reply. "There, then, read that," said the superintendent, as he put before him such passages as these, "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live." "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?" And "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, hat whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

"What does this mean?" asked the man, very earnestly. "What book is that?" The superintendent told him it was the Bible, and that it meant his salvation. The thief-maker became thoughtful. By this time the music ceased, when another hymn—a "lament" on the death of Christ—was sung with much tenderness. This fairly overcame the thief-maker. He could stand it no longer; his heart was melted, and tears flowed. Then the superintendent, in a whisper, but faithfully and affectionately, preached Christ. Conviction, deep and earnest, was produced, and, while conscience seemed to raise a thick cloud of darkness before his eyes, the devoted teacher, fearing that the devil was about to preach to the man in the language of despair, again called for music, a song of triumph, which inspired him with hope.

The school was dismissed. But the superintendent did not leave the thief-maker to go home alone. He went with him, read to him, conversed with him, prayed for him, invited him to his house, and never ceased to labour and to pray until that man's soul was saved.

And was it not a glorious triumph? Eight years have passed away since the thief-maker was brought to the feet of Christ. He has been since then employed in a responsible public situation, and has distinguished himself by consistency, and devotedness in the service of the Lord. That native force of character which made him so dangerous in the service of Satan, has made him, by the power of God's grace, most useful in the service of God. Instead of training boys to become thieves, he trains boys to become Christians, and, having had much forgiven, he loves much.—[*From an admirable work entitled "Brands plucked from the Burning," by the Rev. J. H. Wilson.*]

Poet's Corner.

LOSING TO LIVE.

"There is that which scattereth, and yet increaseth."—Prov. xxiv. 17.

FOREVER the sun is pouring his gold
On a hundred worlds that beg and borrow;
His warmth he squanders, on summits cold,
His wealth on the homes of want and sorrow.
To withhold his largess of precious light
Is to bury himself in eternal night,
To give
Is to live.

The flower shines not for itself at all;
Its joy is the joy it freely diffuses;
Of beauty and balm it is prodigal,
And it lives in the life it sweetly loses.
No choice for the rose but glory or doom,
To exhale or smother, to wither or bloom.
To deny
Is to die.

The seas lend silvery rain to the land,
The land its sapphire streams to the ocean;
The heart sends blood to the brain of command,
The brain to the heart its lightning motion.
And ever and ever we yield our breath—
Till the mirror is dry and images death.
To give
Is to live.

He is dead whose hand is not opened wide
To help the need of a human brother;
He doubles the strength of his life-long ride
Who gives his fortunate place to another.
And a thousand million lives are his
Who carries the world in his sympathies.
To deny
Is to die.

Teachers' Column.

HINTS FOR THOSE WHO NEED THEM.

Some teachers appear to rely upon a kind of inspiration when they enter their classes. Being too indolent or too careless to make any sort of preparation for their work, they seek to justify their negligence by references to the supposed want of training on the part of the Apostles, of whom they invariably speak as ignorant and uncultivated men. But they ignore the fact that they spent three years studying under the greatest teacher the world has ever seen, and that before they were sent out on their mission they were miraculously endowed with a large share of general knowledge.

Terrible mistakes are often made with regard to the character of the work. Many persons seem to think that by giving up two or three hours on Sundays, they can still a troublesome conscience, discharge their duty towards God, and obtain an excuse for letting a large portion of their talents remain idle.

In the school, as elsewhere, mere activity is often mistaken for zeal. It by no means follows that because a man is always talking and doing, he talks and works to good purpose. Judas was active enough. He carried the bag, and made the bargains, and his hand was busy on the table at the last supper; but he was a worker of mischief all the time.

It is easy to be circumspect when the eyes of our class are upon us, but if our teaching is to be worth anything, it must be tested in practice by us when we are not on view.

Teachers who complain of the smallness of their classes will do well to remember that one of the most remarkable discourses ever delivered was spoken by the side of a well, while a woman, and one only, listened.

Some persons are very fond of trying to persuade children that the world is all gloom and shadow—a dreary desert, in fact, which they are to scramble through as best they may, but in which they are to find no enjoyment. Paul, it is true, said we have no abiding city here, but he never asserted that a good share of happiness might not be enjoyed on earth, and a greater than Paul promised His followers rich blessings in this

life. Let us be careful, then, how we make religion appear to be a gloomy and miserable thing when dealing with the little ones.

Partial obedience is sometimes an evil, as when a teacher, in dealing with an unruly scholar, adopts the first portion of the injunction, "Be angry, and sin not," but forgets the second. To use rewards as a stimulus to secure a pupil's attention to the message of love, is an odd but a popular way of going to work.

Example is better than precept. Teachers who indulge in small talk and gossiping during school hours will find this out to their cost.

FROM THE KNOWN TO THE UNKNOWN.

To make the unknown known, to place it as a living power in the mind of the learner, to plant it as a growing germ in his heart, to kindle it as a light in his understanding, to mingle it as a new and divine element with his practical purposes and principles, and thus by its aid to nourish, illumine, and discipline the soul, is the very core of the teacher's task.

The practical applications of this law give us the following useful rules:

1. Ascertain carefully what the pupil already knows of the subject you propose to teach.

2. Ripen, as much as possible, this knowledge by securing from him a clear statement of it; and labour to increase the clearness and vividness of his conceptions.

3. Begin with the facts which lie nearest to him, and the truths most clearly connected with those which he already knows. Thus, we begin geography with the door yard; history, with our own experience; arithmetic, with the counted fingers; and theology, with God's gifts to ourselves.

4. Use for illustration the most common and familiar objects and scenes; they will carry something of their own familiarity into the new truth.

5. Resist temptation to proceed rapidly, and be content to take short steps, proportioned to the age and attainment of the pupil.

6. Dwell on each step by multiplied illustrations, examples, and application till it becomes familiar, and its connection with the preceding steps are clearly seen.

7. Repeat at each step the processes required by rules 1 and 2, and thoroughly inweave the new knowledge with the old.

DR. J. M. GREGORY.

WHINING.

WE commend the following anecdote to those teachers who adopt a whining—we had almost said a canting—tone in public prayer or during their addresses.

A curate adopted a monotonous whine in his prayers. On being remonstrated with by his bishop, he pleaded that such a tone was very proper in acts of supplication, because beggars always assumed a whine when they asked for alms.

The bishop replied, sharply: "Yes; but when they do I always know that they are impostors, and give them nothing."

Teachers, be natural in all things, but especially in your tone of voice. Now, no two voices are alike, but every one has some distinction, either in pitch or intonation, which distinguishes it from every other person's. And thus even a child can tell, when you speak at the desk, whether the tone is natural or a forced one. If, then, you adopt either a theatrical or a whining tone, you will be liable to such a criticism as this, which at once put down a clergyman who was addressing a Ragged School—"That cove's too theatrical."

Ever speak, then, in your natural tone—avoiding either the effeminate drawl of the dandy, or the whining tone of the mendicant, if you would really *tell* upon

your scholars. For no one sooner than they can discriminate betwixt the true and the false even in so small a thing as the voice.

Be natural and manly, and you will please; and it may be that the truths given out of a full heart, with an earnest utterance, will reach the conscience.

"Be to thyself but true,
And it will follow as the night the day
Thou canst not then be false to any man!"

QUARTUS.

Facts and Scraps.

RAGGED SCHOOL LIBRARIES. — Last month the books so kindly granted by the Religious Tract Society (see *ante*, p. 147) to replenish Ragged School Libraries were distributed. Sixty schools participated in this liberal gift. The number of volumes amounted to 2,258, giving an average donation of nearly forty books. The gift, we need scarcely say, is much prized by the scholars.

"SCHOOL BOARD CHRONICLE" ON FREE SCHOOLS.—From experience gained in working Board Schools many are fast coming to the conclusion that free Ragged Schools—called by any other name you please — are really a want in all our large towns. This point is strongly enforced in the leader of the *School Board Chronicle* of September 14. It says:—"The real want in an immense town like Liverpool is *free schools for the lowest class of children*. That would relieve the ordinary elementary schools of an element which must be a difficulty and a hindrance. We have already advocated the establishment of this class of free schools, and we believe they will be found an *absolute necessity* in densely-populated districts."

DEATH RATES.—It is a curious fact, says the *Philadelphia Medical and Surgical Reporter*, and one well worth knowing, that the death-rate in Europe is nearly double what it is in the United States, averaging yearly one out of every forty-three inhabitants, while in America it is only one out of every eighty-one. Of the leading countries of Europe, France leads in its mortality, the average being one death to thirty-two people; and England appears to be the healthiest, the deaths being one to every forty-six. In the United States there is a wide range of difference. In Arkansas, for instance, the annual deaths are one to every forty-nine inhabitants, while in Oregon the rate is said to be only one to every two hundred and nine. It appears that the North-western States average the healthiest, and the Gulf States the sickliest.

POOR MEN'S MEAT.—At the Worship Street police-court a slaughterman and butcher, of Brick Lane, Spitalfields, was charged with having on his premises a quantity of diseased meat in course of preparation for human food. The evidence showed that on the night of the 19th inst. there was received at the defendant's shed a Dutch cow suffering from lung disease and pleuro-pneumonia in its worst form. The animal had been seen on the road by the sanitary officer of the parish, and when, a short time afterwards, he went to the defendant's place, he saw the animal killed, and it was admitted that it was "queer." The defendant was present while it was being dressed, but made no offer to stop its preparation for food, so Mr. Burrowes, the sanitary officer, called in Dr. Sarvis, medical officer of health, and, under his directions, seized the carcase. The lungs were in a fearfully diseased state. Mr. Bushby sentenced defendant to a month's imprisonment.

Correspondence.

SECULAR EDUCATION IN RAGGED SCHOOLS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Dear Sir,—In regard to secular and compulsory education in lieu of direct religious and scriptural instruction in our Day Schools, will you allow me to make a few simple statements?

Earl Shaftesbury said at Exeter Hall, in May, 1869, "It is the Gospel which has done the work; it is the Gospel which will do the work." . . . . "I see what is looming in the distance. I see a gradually increasing desire for compulsory education. Now, if education be *compulsory*, it must be *secular*. It is impossible we can bring up all the children of the nation and instruct them in one religious belief; secular it must be, and secular it will be."—See *R. S. Magazine*, June, 1869.

Now, I quite agree in these sentiments, but I cannot see, if Government or Board Schools only give secular instruction (with a little more or less of Bible teaching, or without any) we must give up Bible teaching in our Ragged Schools.

As one who entered upon the work some thirty years ago, I should be very glad if Government or the School Board, or any one else, would undertake to teach the secular part, and leave us free to carry on our Bible teaching without the trouble and expense of teaching the three R's.

It was to impart religious knowledge that I first entered on the work, and it is the same, I believe, with your Committee, and with your 3,000 voluntary teachers. I ask, Would they not gladly be freed from the fag and worry of teaching A B C, etc., and from the expense of school-rent, teacher's salary, and other heavy items? My opinion is that, freed from these, religious men and women would accomplish far more than they do now for our rude City Arabs. I said so many years ago, and if my opinion is of any moment at all, I say so still. When asked before a Commission of the House of Commons on Criminal and Destitute Juveniles, June, 1852, "What would be the effect on our Ragged Schools of aid given by Government?" I said, "I thought it would tend to stimulate our efforts very much." I think the same now. And if the Field Lane people merely let their schoolrooms for a few hours a day to the School Board for certain rent, and are left free to carry on their religious and mission work as before, are they not likely to do it better than they would do when they had the secular part also to attend to?

On such terms I would gladly see all our Ragged Schools in the hands of the School Board, and would expect to find the work better done then than it can be done now.

I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.,

Wm. Locke.

Anerley, September, 1872.

CHILDREN'S CHURCHES.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Sir,—Most platform speakers reiterate the fact that not one-third of the labouring classes attend the public means of grace. But "is there not a cause?" I think that there is, and one which is very much overlooked, namely, that thousands of children, after attending Sunday School for an hour and a half on Sunday morning, are dragged into church or chapel for another hour and a half at least, and there have to listen to discourses which are no more suited to their age or capacity than Greek would be to an idiot. The sermon may not be "high and dry," and yet it may be utterly unintelligible to a child. That prince of preachers, the apostle Paul, ever kept this fact in view; and thus, though none more than he gave "strong meat" to men, he always took care to give only "milk to babes."

Can we wonder, then, with this process reversed, that so many who have attended Sunday Schools remember this infliction, and in sheer anger at the past, stay away from public worship in more mature years?

I am glad, then, to find that 43 Ragged Schools have initiated a "more excellent way" by opening Children's Churches. It is satisfactory to find that, though no force is used save that of persuasion, these services—mostly held on Sunday morning—attract 3,414 of our scholars. Those I have seen at work have been most wisely conducted. Neither prayer, praise, nor the address has been lengthy; and the service, though brief—about one hour—has been marked by that variety which is so charming to youth. As one result, at least, we may expect that the *habit* of attending public worship will be so formed in early life as to render attendance thereat a necessity in riper years.

It is in connection with this subject that I desire to point out a glaring, and I fear a growing, evil to my fellow-workers—namely, the number of Ragged Schools which are closed on Sunday *morning*—the very time when street traffic is rampant. From the last Report of the Ragged School Union, it appears that no less than 107 schools, or about three-fifths, are never opened on Sunday morning. I am quite aware of the difficulty there is in getting scholars to attend in the morning. Elder girls especially have to help their mothers in household work; and many little children cannot be got ready in time.

But this evil could be obviated by opening a Children's Church. The services of only two teachers are required—nay, even one energetic teacher would suffice to conduct the service with spirit. As the Children's Church would not be opened before eleven, elder children could be more readily released from household duties, and little ones be more easily got ready. In this way the 107 Ragged Schools which are now closed at the brightest part of the Lord's day might be opened, and thousands of lambs be gathered into the fold of the Good Shepherd.

An old adage, not yet worn out, indicates that "Where there's a will there's a way." Let, then, every closed school be opened as a Children's Church on Sunday morning, and I doubt not that the success would be so signal as to cause surprise that this simple experiment was not tried many years ago.

Yours, &c., A Looker-on.

Notices of Meetings.

GEORGE YARD, WHITECHAPEL.

The eighteenth annual meeting of this institution was recently held in the schoolroom, when the Right Hon. the Earl of Shaftesbury, the president, took the chair.

Mr. George Holland, the superintendent and honorary secretary, read a long and interesting report of the institution for the past year. It comprises in its missionary operations, amongst a population of 120,000 crowded into the square mile in which George Yard is situated, the following agencies:—For children: A Day, Evening, and Sunday School, Children's Services, a Band of Hope, Sewing and Knitting Classes, a Class for teaching the Sewing Machine, a Farthing Bank, distribution of food to the necessitous, clothing lent to regular attendants, medicine for the sick, Library, Baths, and Lavatories, a Swimming Class, soup suppers for street children, shelter for outcast boys, and home for lads who have obtained employment: for senior scholars, Bible Classes and Prayer Meetings; and for adults, Religious Services, Prayer Meetings, Lodging-house Services, Temperance Meetings, Open-air Services, Bible Classes, Mothers' Meetings, tract distribution, Sick-visiting Society, Believers' Meetings, Library, Working Men's Benefit Club, and Free Loan Society. Through these various agencies about 1,000 children are brought under Christian influences, and nearly 1,200 people are week by week brought within the sound of the Gospel.

MARIGOLD PLACE, BERMONDSEY.

The twelfth annual meeting of this school was recently held in the schoolroom, Marigold Street. The chair was taken by Donald Matheson, Esq.

The Report stated that it was considered necessary in the last Report to refer to the work of the London School Board, and it might be well again to make brief reference to this body. It was stated a fortnight ago by a prominent Member of the Board, that there still remained upwards of 100,000 children in London who were attending no Day School, and that the School Board have powers of work to do without having any of the existing schools thrown upon them. In the month of May an Inspector from the Council of Education examined the children, and the Committee were afterwards gratified at receiving a letter from him in which he said—"This is not at all an official letter, but I may take the opportunity of saying that the school is in such good order and working as to deserve that everything should be done which can be done to further its interests." The Day School has an average attendance of 126; number on the books, 190. The usefulness of the Evening School has been considerably enhanced by the appointment of a competent master, and also by the addition of an extra evening, it being now open on three evenings in each week instead of two as formerly. Average attendance, 47. The Sunday School continues well attended. In the afternoon the numbers are comparatively few, averaging 119, but in the evening the scholars are more frequently too numerous than too few. The average attendance at this time has been 193 with 15 teachers, but occasionally as many as 20 classes have been held with 250 scholars. Seven scholars received prizes at Exeter Hall for retaining their situations for twelve months and upwards. The liberality of several friends enabled the teacher of the Day School to give 2,654 Dinners during the winter. The Mothers' Meetings, of which two are held weekly, continue well attended: the average attendance on Monday evenings has been 28, and on Wednesday afternoons 40.

Papers, Original and Selected.

CONVALESCENT HOMES.

THERE never was a time when charity was so much regarded as the necessary outcome of vital religion. For though Christianity is pre-eminently a *creed*, it is something besides that. Rightly viewed, then, as religion is not a life without a creed, neither is it a creed without a corresponding life; for right living as necessarily springs from right belief, as does the oak from the acorn. Thus it is that kindness to all—more especially to the sick and the infirm—becomes the ideal of the true Christian; and no groan can be heard from the great human brotherhood without eliciting a sympathetic response.

We have, then, no sympathy with a platform oracle who recently said that "he was thankful to say that he had never given away a penny to a beggar in the streets." For we would rather make five mistakes in giving than one in withholding; knowing Who hath said, there is that which "withholdeth more than is meet, and which tendeth to poverty"—even that worst form of poverty, spiritual penury.

Yet some discrimination ought to be exercised, even in giving the charitable dole, or we may only assist the professional beggar in his career of deception. The following recent police case will illustrate what we mean :—

Henry and Caroline W. were recently convicted at Dorchester for attempting to obtain money by false pretences. For eleven years they realised an income of £400 a-year from begging letters. The woman used to write as the wife of a broken-down author reduced to destitution, anxious to get to Sydney, but unable to start for awhile in consequence of illness. Replies from the charitable came rapidly in, consisting of clothes and money. The next move was very ingenious. In gratitude for favours received, the poor lady, now restored to health, and on the eve of leaving dear old England, dispatched to each of her kind friends a little vase-mat, accompanied by a note begging a word in reply to say how it was received. This, of course, brought in a second crop,

and so the game went on for eleven years. W. three months' imprisonment, and his wife was excused as being under her husband's influence.

Probably there is no form of charity to which less exception can be made than to that of our public Hospitals and Infirmaries. For to be stricken down by disease implies, with the bulk of the labouring class, semi-starvation, if not eventual pauperism, unless medical advice and suitable nourishment are provided free. But, happily, through the foresight of our ancestors, almost every disease has its specific hospital; and medical talent of the highest order is freely given to alleviate, if not to cure, those physical ailments which are a part of our sad inheritance from Adam.

But, in the bulk of cases, mere cure is not enough. For example, take a poor man to his home—it may be into an impure atmosphere, or still worse surroundings—just recovered from a serious illness, weak as he is, a relapse may be almost predicted. His earnings at best must be far below the ordinary average; and even if they were up to the mark, he would still be unable to purchase that nourishing food which is needful to build up the exhausted frame. Or take another case: some earnest Ragged School teacher has been struck down or blood-poisoned by those fevers which so often dominate in the byways of our great cities. Restored by the mercy of God on the means employed, he has been ordered to go into the country for a month, but with tears in his eyes he has said, "But where is the money to come from?"

In the case of many of our paid teachers this want has been met by a fund initiated by "A. L. O. E." under the title of "Rest for Weary Workers." It is not too much to say that the health and strength of many half-worn-out workers has been restored by the week's rest away from the foul scenes amid which they labour, amongst rural sights and sweet air, and that without encroaching on their limited means. In many cases, then, the cottages where they were sent became true convalescent homes, though without the name.

It was to meet cases like these that latest offshoot of British charity was devised, namely, that perfecting supplement to the regular hospital, the Convalescent Home.

Convalescent Homes were founded about thirty years ago. It appears from Low's "Handbook to the Charities of London" that there are already twenty of such Homes. They are mostly planted

by the sea-side, and when not, still far away from the smoke and dizzying whirl of London.

Two or three of the Convalescent Homes recently opened may be mentioned as giving some idea of the class for whose benefit they are chiefly established.

The Merchant Taylors opened recently with great success a Convalescent Home at Bognor. This Home consists of a substantial house between the railway-station and the sea, with seven acres of splendidly timbered land. It has been purchased, fitted up, and furnished by the Merchant Taylors' Company, at great cost, for the reception of convalescent patients from the London hospitals, for the treatment of upwards of forty invalids. These have been so far relieved as to require only good nursing, sea air, and nourishment for their restoration to health. The Home has been liberally endowed in perpetuity by the Company.

Another is a Sanatorium for Women. Many poor overworked women require cessation from work, together with good air and nourishing food for a short period. To meet this pressing need a sanatorium for women has just been opened at Rhyl, North Wales. The terms are 12s. 6d. per week, which includes every necessity, together with good medical attendance. As poor women cannot afford this sum, Mrs. Goode, the widow of Dean Goode, hon. superintendent, receives donations to admit them free of charge.

In 1870 a similar Convalescent Home was opened at Dover. From the prospectus we learn that this Home—in connection with the London Young Women's Christian Associations and Homes—has been established for sick and needy Governesses, Shop Women, Needle Women, Bible Women, Sunday and RAGGED SCHOOL Teachers, and others engaged in Mission Work. It is well known that in London houses of business, numbers are prostrated by labouring day and night in crowded ill-ventilated rooms, whose exhausted frames greatly need the three benefits provided by this Home, viz., sea air, nourishing food, and complete rest. During the last three years, invalids have been sent to the Home at Brighton; and it is gratifying to know that 620 invalids have been there received—a large number of whom were sent free of expense by means of a fund collected for the benefit of those who would otherwise have been unable to enjoy its advantages. A large house having been offered for a Convalescent Home, free of rent, by the generous liberality of the London, Chatham, and Dover

Company, at Dover, it is proposed to carry on this much-needed work there in future. The terms of admission to this Home are 7s. per week, which includes every charge but that for laundress and medicine. There is also a *Free Fund*, from which necessitous and friendless invalids are sent to the Home and there maintained for a fortnight free of expense at the recommendation of a subscriber. An annual subscription of one guinea entitles the donor to send one invalid free to the Home for a fortnight. So much was the Dover Home appreciated, that 160 were admitted during the first six months.

The latest Convalescent Home was opened by Sir Sydney Waterlow, the new Lord Mayor of London. It is planted in a house at the rear of his residence at Highgate. Restricted to convalescent patients of St. Bartholemew's Hospital, it introduces the novel but valuable principle of supplementing the regular hospital by a Convalescent Home. Sir S. Waterlow, at the inauguration, when the Prince of Wales presided, gave the following as his reasons for making this splendid donation to his poorer brethren :—

"All those who are connected with the great hospitals of the metropolis, whether as governors or members of the medical staff, must have felt that the work they undertake is in one sense incomplete. These institutions are equipped with all that science can supply or charity can suggest for the cure of diseases and ailments of all kinds, but are almost without the means of giving help during the period of convalescence. A patient is cured in a medical point of view, and therefore dismissed, but too often unfit to contend with the great struggle for life which all working men in this great metropolis have to contend with. He reaches his home (straitened and pinched in all its surroundings by the illness of the breadwinner), a relapse takes place, and the man has to be sent back to the hospital or to the workhouse more prostrate than ever. A great difficulty in the practical working arises from the fact that the Convalescent Homes already established are at long distances from London, and are generally separate institutions, not connected with the hospitals. Admittance into them is only gained by distinct application, separate interest and favour. The principle which I am anxious to test is that of making the Convalescent Home an integral and essential part of the hospital itself, and thus to enable the medical officer, by his own action, to carry his patient

one step further towards recovery, and not to dismiss him until he is able to send him to work. The medical officer is not to lose sight of his patient; he will send him here for a short time with the same facility that he would recommend his transfer from one ward to another of the hospital itself. For this object to be fully attained in all hospital work two things are needful; first, that there should be many more such Homes as these in the suburbs of London, within easy reach of the medical staff of the several hospitals and of the homes of the patients; secondly, that the authorities of the hospitals should be willing to accept them in the same generous spirit that the governors of St. Bartholemew's have taken upon themselves the responsibility of this establishment. The conversion and adaptation of this old historic building has been a great gratification to me, and a labour of love. With these objects and these hopes I first commenced this work. It has been my great desire to render the Home as complete as possible in all its furniture and other details, and I am much gratified by the approval which your Royal Highness has so kindly expressed of its general appearance and surroundings. I hope that in the years to come many poor and suffering patients may here enjoy that repose and quiet which may give them health and strength to go about the work of their lives, and that as they walk in the fresh air and sunshine of the terrace and look down on the great city which lies at our feet, a feeling of gratitude may rise in their hearts, and that they may have yet further cause to bless that great institution with which so many around us to-day have been actively connected for many years, and over which your Royal Highness so graciously presides."

A few female cases admitted into the Dover Home will show the kind of cases received and the lasting good effected :—

L. S., aged twenty-three, was show-room attendant at a West-end establishment, and was compelled to be at work at eight every morning, a fine of sixpence being imposed if a moment late. She writes : "I received five shillings a week, my food being provided. It was so coarse and bad that I could seldom eat it. Besides, I was never allowed to sit down for a moment. If the master of the establishment saw us sitting down, he would severely reprove us. I used to get quite faint, and though requiring food, was often unable to eat it when it came. Going backwards and forwards in all weathers, especially when one's clothes are thin, seems to try

one's health so." L. S. came to the Home broken down with the fatigue and overstrain of her faculties. After a few weeks she left, quite restored, and with a prospect of being happily married.

E. and M., aged twenty-two and nineteen. Two young orphans, fringe and trimming makers in the City. The first worn out and weakened by illness. Her sister begged to accompany her, as they could not bear to be separated, for being the only ones left of their family, they were quite alone in the world. After a short rest they were able to return to their business; the invalid much restored.

H. D., aged about sixty. The daughter of a medical man, she was formerly in easy circumstances. Her father met with reverses, and she was obliged to gain her living as a governess. Gradually, health failed, and, one by one, all her friends died; while she found her teaching completely left behind by modern accomplishments. Before she came to the Home she was unable, through weakness, to do more for her support than earn sixpence a day by needlework, and even this scanty means of subsistence seemed likely to fail. After a short residence, her strength began to return, and she left comparatively restored to health.

J., aged twenty, needlewoman, was an orphan with no home. She was broken down with overwork, followed by rheumatic fever, which prevented her moving about. At the close of some months spent at the Home after leaving the hospital, she became sufficiently recovered to take long walks and to earn her own living by needlework.

A. D., orphan. She lost her health owing to the poisonous effects of arsenic in artificial flower-making, which caused incessant vomiting and threatened her life. After a month at the sea she has returned to a more wholesome employment, and with fair prospect of regaining her strength.

C. H., dressmaker. Her father was once a respectable tradesman, but is now paralyzed and penniless. She worked day and night to support her family till she became prostrate by illness. Her mother was then compelled to seek employment as a charwoman, for the support of both invalids and several young children. Through the instrumentality of this Home, C. H. was restored to health, and by her industry is now contributing largely to the maintenance of the family.

Well, then, might Lord Shaftesbury say at the opening of a Convalescent Home at Glasgow :—

"In these days, when charities are abundant, and along with charities every form of imposture, there is no charity so safe as that of a hospital; and the necessary appendage to every hospital is a Convalescent Home. A hospital without a convalescent institution, is like a man without his wife. A Convalescent Home is essentially necessary for the completion of the cure. How often have I seen that a man or a woman sent out of the hospital in the earliest period of what is called recovery, and who *must* be sent out owing to the exigencies of the charity, often falls back into a relapse, having to go home to foul air, to noise, and trouble. Whereas if they could be received within the hospitable embrace of such an institution as this they would be soon confirmed in the blessed cure that God has imparted to them, that they may go on to the remainder of their lives earning an honest livelihood, and not visited again by attacks of disease."

Need we say more to show the importance of this recent movement to help the sick to help themselves? Whatever doubts there may be about other forms of charity, there surely can be none about this—so long at least as our Convalescent Homes are confined to the proper class. For they help many, upon whom their families are dependent, to regain the strength lost in sickness, who otherwise must have perished from sheer exhaustion, or have sunk into the ranks of that pauperism which disgraces our land. And, after all, that is the truest form of charity which, by giving strength to weakness, helps others to help themselves, rather than that false benevolence which practically teaches the needy to make a crutch of their richer brethren.

PRESENTATION TO DR. CROSS.

WE are glad to intimate that, after seven months' serious illness, Mr. Gent, the Secretary of the Ragged School Union for more than a quarter of a century, bas been able to resume his official labours. Under the blessing of God on the remedies employed, his restoration to health is mainly due to the kind and skilful attention of a member of the Committee of the Union, Dr. Robert Cross. As that eminent physician declined to accept any fee for his valuable services, the Committee considered it but right to mark their sense of the service rendered to the Union by presenting their colleague

with some slight token of their regard. This testimonial assumed the form of a drawing-room-table book. It is beautifully illuminated by hand on vellum, by Mr. Cunningham. Bound in morocco, and lined with white silk, it has a very handsome appearance. On the outside is Dr. Cross's monogram in pierced metal. This valuable book has the following inscription :—

"Presented to Robert Cross, Esq., M.D., by the Committee of the Ragged School Union, in recognition of the services rendered to this Society during the long and dangerous illness of its Secretary, Mr. Joseph G. Gent. The Committee, while expressing their devout gratitude to Almighty God in sparing the life of His servant, who for more than a quarter of a century has been their able and active representative, have by unanimous vote—'Resolved: That their cordial thanks be presented to their colleague, Dr. Cross, for the disinterested, able, and gratuitous services rendered to Mr. Gent, and for the unremitting attention and skill which have so largely contributed, under God, to his recovery.'"

(*Signed.*)

Shaftesbury,	J. A Kitching,
Thos. Brooker,	J. H. Lloyd,
J. H. Buckingham,	Robert Mounstephen,
Thos. Edward Crabb,	Henry C. Pierson,
R. Glover,	R. J. Snape,
W. D. Griffith,	Henry Spicer, Jun.,
J. Harris,	Richard Stone,
Samuel Haward,	Burnett Tabrum,
Quintin Hogg,	H. R. Williams,
A. F. Kinnaird,	Joseph S. Wyon.

The testimonial was presented to Dr. Cross on Friday, October 11th, at the usual monthly meeting of the Managing Committee. Mr. H. R. Williams, who presided, said that when the health of their Secretary was stated to be gradually improving, and that Dr. Cross had, by the blessing of God, been the means of his restoration, it was thought proper to present their colleague with some slight acknowledgment of the service thereby rendered to the Union. He had therefore great pleasure, in the name of the Committee, to ask Dr. Cross to accept a small token of their regard.

Dr. Cross said that he was much pleased to place his medical knowledge at the disposal of their friend Mr. Gent. But he was sure that what he had done, any other member of the Committee would have as readily done, had he been connected with his profession. Though he had been amply rewarded by Mr. Gent's recovery, at the same time he accepted the testimonial with much pleasure, and should ever regard it with the utmost delight.

Mr. Gent added a few words, thanking Dr. Cross for the kindness and skill invariably shown, and also expressing his gratitude to the Committee for their sympathy through his long and dangerous illness.

FINDING THE LOST SHEEP.

BY THE REV. THEODORE CUYLER, D.D.

In Mr. George Kennan's fascinating "Tent Life in Siberia" is a very thrilling account of a search made by the author for a party of his lost countrymen on the Anadyr river. After a journey by dog-sledge for 200 miles over drifted snow, they reach the spot where they conjecture the missing Americans to be buried away under the snow. Mr. Kennan and his companion are well-nigh perishing themselves from cold which has sunk the mercury to fifty degrees below zero! The feet of their poor dogs spot the white snow with blood at every step. One of the two brave explorers has already sunk exhausted on his sledge, and is fast falling into the sleep of death. Suddenly at midnight, Mr. Kennan hears a faint, long-drawn halloo across the wintry waste. It comes from one of his "Chookchee," who has gone on in advance. He hurries to the spot, all the blood in his veins throbbing at his heart. As he comes up he discovers the Chookchee standing by a small black pipe projecting from a snowbank. The lost wanderers must be under it. "'Thank God! thank God!' I repeated to myself softly," says the heroic writer; "and as I climbed upon the snowdrift, and shouted down the pipe, 'Halloo the house!' I heard a startled voice under my feet reply, 'Who is there?' As I entered the snow-cellar, and seized hold of my long-lost friends, my over-strained nerves gave way, and in ten minutes I could hardly raise my hands to my lips."

Reading the above thrilling scene in my friend Kennan's book, I found the tears stealing down my own cheeks in sympathy with the brave fellows who had perilled their lives in order to rescue their lost friends from death by cold and starvation. After concluding the narrative, which had almost the sweet "lineament of a gospel-book," I opened my Bible, and read this parable which Jesus spake:—

"What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing."

With this vivid scene of the Siberian search fresh in my mind, I read this exquisite parable with a new delight. I seemed to see our Divine Shepherd starting off after the lost sheep. He knows the thickets or the quagmires into which the silly truant must have strayed. He may hear its bleatings afar off. He goes until he finds it. He does not beat it for straggling; but pulling it out of the mire, or drawing it from the tangled thicket, he layeth it on his shoulders—the clean carrying the unclean, the holy carrying the unholy! Beautiful picture of Jesus, the sinbearer! Every saved soul has been upon Christ's shoulders. When he "bore our sins" and "carried our sorrows," then was the befouled yet precious load upon Jesus' shoulder. Yes, and he bids us "cast our cares" upon him too. The whole load he takes up joyfully.

Say what we may about free agency, or about the activity of the soul in regeneration, it is equally true that not a solitary sheep would ever have entered the fold of God if the Divine Shepherd had not come to seek and to save the lost. He came after each one. For Jesus "tasted death for every man"—for the individual, and not for the vague mass of undistinguishable humanity. That "one sheep" was lost was enough to start the loving Shepherd on his search. What an argument is this to labour for the conversion of one soul!

It has often been said as a cavil by students of astronomy, if this globe of ours is only a mere speck in the starry universe, amid millions of suns and planets, why should the Son of God single out this diminutive globe as the theatre of his incarnation and sufferings? Why did he stoop to such a little world as ours? In reply to this cavil, Dr. Chalmers prepared and preached his magnificent "Astronomical Discourses." But we think that this exquisite parable throws a hint of suggestive light on this problem; for, though we do not know that our Saviour never went on an errand of redemption to any other planet, we do know that he came to this one of ours. We do not know that he went to stupendous Jupiter, or to belted Saturn, or to far-away Neptune.

He did not go perhaps to the planet that was biggest in size, but to the one that was basest in sin. He came not "to the largest world, but to the lost world." Ah! he may have left the "ninety and nine" glorious and gigantic orbs which never wandered, and sought out the single one in which lay a race of sinners lost in misery and guilt!

There is one stroke in the parable which we must not lose sight of. It is that which depicts the exquisite joy of the Rescuer. When the shepherd "findeth the sheep, he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing." He is glad, for the sake of the restored sheep, but still more for his own. It was "for the joy set before him that he endured the cross and despised the shame." Into that sublime joy how many elements may enter! There must have been in my Saviour's heart a holy ecstasy of love which pleased itself in doing good—in saving me when lost—enduring suffering and sacrifice for my salvation. This sublime love of the Sin-bearer makes even the crown of thorns flash as a diadem of splendours on the Redeemer's bleeding brow. Here was the Divine luxury of doing good.

It is a sweet thought too that Jesus would have missed me if I had

never been sought and brought back. As the shepherd in the story left the ninety and nine to hunt for the single straggler, so I may gladly hope that Jesus wanted me in heaven, or else he would not have come so far or endured so much to save me. If I were left without him, there would have been one more soul in hell. But if he were left without me, there would be one soul the less to sing his praise in heaven. He would have had one the less to present to his Father "with exceeding joy."

For observe that the sweet parable says nothing about the delight of the sheep in being found; it only depicts the exceeding joy of the shepherd in finding the wanderer. He calls his neighbours together to share his gladness. "Likewise there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." The common and inaccurate rendering of this text confines the joy to the angels only, as if it read "among the angels." Just as well say that the "neighbours" felt the thrill of gladness over the recovered sheep, and not the shepherd himself.

The transcendent joy in heaven over a saved soul is not confined to the angel-bands. It is only witnessed by them, and partially shared by them. It is "in their presence" that the celestial rapture breaks forth. But the supreme joy is in the bosom of the enthroned Redeemer! His was the sorrow, when he was "exceeding sorrowful even unto death." His is the joy, when he presents even one repentant sinner before the "presence of his glory." He sees the travail of his soul and is satisfied.

O beloved Saviour! when we behold Thee on Thy throne, the Saviour amid His ransomed flock, Thy victories complete, the last wandering sheep brought home, the last recovered jewel glittering in Thy crown; then we will confess that the triumph was worthy of the toil, and the ransom of Thy glorified Church was worthy of all the bitter agonies of Him who came to seek and save the lost! "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing for ever and ever!"

ST. HELENS RAGGED SCHOOL, LANCASHIRE.

The bulk of the population of St. Helens consists of workers in the various works and mines, with a very small proportion of manufacturers and other employers of labour. The abundance of labour at all times permits but little destitution as the result of sheer poverty, yet a great amount of misery exists, the effect of intemperance and improvidence. The judge, who for many years presided over the St. Helens County Court, said lately, "He never came to St. Helens without having a heartache when he heard the way in which many respectable and decent wives had to lead a life of poverty and sorrow, while the husbands were spending all they could earn upon themselves. . . . There were nearly as many persons committed to gaol from St. Helens as from Liverpool, although in the former place not one-fifth of the business was transacted that was done in Liverpool. The published return of commitments from St. Helens, was a direful document, and he did not know what was to be done to remedy the evil."

The following figures, obtained from the medical inspector under the Factory Act, afford some idea of the ignorance of the youth of the town. Out of a large number of young people over thirteen years of age who passed the inspector, it was found that 21 per cent. could neither read, write, nor cypher; 34 per cent. read and wrote with difficulty; 16 per cent. could write their names, but not read; 23 per cent. could read and write, but were ignorant of the first rules of arithmetic; and only 6 per cent. could read, write, and cypher.

The streets of the town on week-days and Sundays bear witness to the same state of things—abounding immorality and irreligion. There exist, therefore, mighty influences for evil, with but little power of resistance for good.

It was to meet these social and spiritual needs that in 1858 a Ragged School was founded by collecting a few children on the Sunday afternoon, in a small cottage, in one of the lowest parts of the town. There has been during those fourteen years steady progress, and from the few children that first met in High Street the school has grown until there are at present about 700 on the books, and 365 in average attendance.

The first step from the overcrowded cottage was to the schoolroom in connection with the works of the Messrs. Pilkington, and after that became too small, the school was removed to the present site, in Aitken Street, where the premises have thrice had to be enlarged. The managers of the school consider the present site better than any other they could select in the town; but adjoining the school is a yard in which are stables and pigstyes.

The school was primarily a Sunday School, established for the religious instruction of those who were otherwise wholly neglected; and the main purpose of the school is still to gather in the outcasts. It is the earnest desire of the teachers not to receive those who attend, or even those who ought to attend, other schools. To induce children to draft themselves away to other Sunday Schools is difficult, as a strong tie of affection is gradually formed between the teachers and the scholars, and even to the school itself. The present secretary of the school was one of its earliest scholars, and some of the teachers have spent years as scholars in the classes. One of these is accepted for foreign mission service by the London Missionary Society, and is at present a student in the Lancashire college. The late Rev. John Williams Best was from his boyhood until he went to college a teacher in the school. These retrospects of the past inspire those who have the conduct of the work with deepest thankfulness, and an earnest hope that the future may prove that the work yet to be done is also of God.

It has been found that the parents of the children at present on the roll attend the following places of worship:—St. Mary's Church, 22; St. Thomas' Church, 22; Independent Chapel, 22; Wesleyan Chapel, 23; Primitive Methodist Chapel, 16; Roman Catholic chapels, 3; Ragged School Service, 6; not specified, 8:—122; attending no place of worship, 233; total, 355. From this return the comprehensive character of the school is manifest, and also to some extent the class it embraces, *over 65 per cent. of the parents not being connected with any place of worship.*

On account of the great amount of ignorance encountered by the teachers

on the Sunday, so many of the children, especially the girls, attending no school in the week, it was found necessary to begin a Day School. It has been worked for five years in the face of grave difficulties. This department was from the first placed under Government inspection, as a public elementary school, although it was feared it would be almost impossible to bring the children up to the requirements of the Government standards. The migratory character of the class is one of the greatest drawbacks. Last year 493 names were entered on the roll, very few of these were re-entries, most of them being fresh names; the largest number on the roll at one time was 410, whilst the average attendance was only 142.

The school has become a centre for temperance meetings and other unsectarian Christian work. For it was found that to effect much good amongst the children, it was necessary to seek to improve their homes and to influence the parents, especially the mothers. For many years a very prosperous Mothers' Meeting has been carried on, the attendance being regularly over eighty, and a Bible Woman, one of Mrs. Ranyard's staff, is connected with the work. The Congregationalists support this Bible Woman, although with a true catholicity which cannot be too much praised, she is not connected with their church, nor is she required to visit amongst the members of their congregation.

A Sunday Evening Service for Adults, conducted by laymen of various denominations, has been held. To render this service and the week night classes more efficient, and also to lay hold of the men, as the Bible Woman has succeeded in doing with the women, a Town Missionary from the Manchester City Mission has been obtained.

This school seems to be so well worked that we trust the Committee will soon succeed in the efforts they are making to purchase the lease of the premises, and erect a more suitable and well-lighted and well-ventilated building.

In Memoriam.

THE COUNTESS OF SHAFTESBURY.

We are sure that our readers will unite with us in our profound regret at having to announce the unexpected death of the Countess of Shaftesbury.

That lamented lady had always been friendly to all movements for the amelioration of the social condition of the poor, more especially the juvenile poor. Thus, when Lord Shaftesbury was requested to take the leadership in the agitation for the Act to reduce the hours of labour of factory boys, he referred the decision to her ladyship, as he knew that he could not comply

with the desire so earnestly expressed without materially interfering with her domestic comfort. What was her reply? The very noble one, "*Go on—and to victory!*" She also took a deep interest in Ragged Schools from the outset, and was a member of the committee of one of the pioneer schools—Gray's Yard Ragged School. That Ragged School, as well as many others, has thus lost a long-tried sympathising friend.

It would not become us to intrude into the domestic circle to indicate what her ladyship was as a wife and mother. But her best epitaph is included in the following extract from a private letter which we have just received from Lord Shaftesbury—"such a pure, sweet, radiant, and Christian spirit is rarely to be found."

The following extract from the *Record* will give full particulars of her ladyship's death:—

"It will be remembered that in a letter to M. Merle d'Aubigné, read at the Geneva Conference on the 24th September, Lord Shaftesbury stated that 'the serious illness' of Lady Shaftesbury rendered it impossible to comply with his invitation to be present on that occasion. But on her ladyship's return from Malvern, where she had suffered much from exhaustion, there appeared to be a recovery, and it was hoped that her constitutional strength, with the aid of change of air, would, under God's blessing, speedily restore her to health. But this was not to be. Her ladyship was out for a carriage drive on Monday; but on the same evening there was a collapse, under which she sank to her rest the next day, October 15th, soon after eleven in the morning.

The lamented countess was the elder daughter of the late Viscountess Palmerston, by her first husband, the fifth Earl Cowper, and born on the 6th of November, 1810. Married 9th of June, 1830, to the present Earl of Shaftesbury, then Lord Ashley; she was a sympathising helpmeet in the great factory movement, of which he soon afterwards undertook the lead. At the great meeting of the operatives of the North of England held a few years ago to present a marble bust in honour of their successful champion, Lord Shaftesbury stated that before he engaged in the struggle, he set before his young wife the sacrifices of political ambition which the struggle involved, and it was not until she gave her hearty and enthusiastic concurrence that he commenced the work which God had so graciously blessed. The much lamented lady leaves behind her four sons and three daughters."

The countess was buried in the family vault of Lord Shaftesbury at St. Giles, Cranbourne, Dorset, on October 19.

We are glad to state, on the highest authority, that the Queen, with her usual thoughtful kindness, has sent an autograph letter to Lord Shaftesbury, expressive of her regard for the departed saint, and her deep sympathy with his sorrow.

Need we ask the prayers of our readers for our noble President and every member of his family, that they may feel the deep comfort of those who do not sorrow as those who are without hope, and who know that the resurrection morn will reunite every scattered member of Christ's body—the Church.

A MIDNIGHT RAMBLE IN THE FAR EAST.

BY T. J. BARNARDO.

'Tis midnight! Gay and fashionable London is just beginning, amid the excitement of pleasure, to spend those mirthful hours in which the seeds, fruitful of a huge harvest of remorse, are sown at leisure, and with an unsparing hand. The sons of toil have long sought rest in slumber for their wearied frames, awaiting unconsciously the return of the early dawn, when the watchman's voice shall arouse them to another day's earnest labour. Vicious London, burglarious London, is now fully awake, intent in many a quarter upon carrying out plans of predatory and criminal warfare upon their fellow-men. We, too, are bent upon an expedition, singular in its objects, but which, we trust, shall be prodvctive of happiest results. Leaving the broad, but now silent, Whitechapel Road, we turn up a street where the glaring lamps of some still-open gin-palaces illustrate the energetic attractiveness of sin, whilst the gilded pillars and looking-glasses within teach us its deceptiveness.

Honey serves to gather flies, and carrion still attracts the vulture and the dog. The lateness of the hour has not emptied the public-houses, for the voice of singing and of mirth, the ribald jest, the drunkard's oath, and sounds as of tipsy brawling, fill the otherwise quiet street and air.

Policeman X.Y.Z. stands outside, wakeful and attentive. "Noisy lot inside, sir," he says, as we pass. "Been inside twice already to-night; wish they'd make 'em shut up at a proper hour." So do we; but merely *wishing* won't do it, and the publican interest is, we fear, too strong in England to suffer much legislative interference.

Now we pass another den, flaring with light, and full of customers. We just peep in, and though the reeking fumes almost drive us back, we have time to observe that they are all poor, these thirsty customers, and women too, so many of them! Look at that woman—the bleared eye and drivelling expression, as well as the worse than rags in which she stands, all speak her name—the gin-drinker! She is a young woman, with a baby in her arms. God help that child! See what she is at; having finished her drink, oh, horror! *she pours the dregs still left in the glass down her poor babe's throat!* 'Tis sickening. Would to God that this foul blot were removed from our churches and our land!

On we go! We are seeking boys, these little homeless vendors of matches, cigar-lights, and fusees, the itinerant shoeblack, the paper-sellers, and the young speculators in odd trifles, from back-hair combs to more edible and perishable commodities.

"Look in there, sir," says my guide, a lad the history of whose life is more filled with varying incident than many a tale of fiction, and whose wanderings in Whitechapel slums, in days gone by, ably qualify him for his night's task. "Look in there, sir!" We look into an empty sugar-hogshead lying upon its side, add see a boy housed, Diogenes-fashion; but doubtless from more needful and less philosophic reasons than his illustrious predecessor.

"Hullo!" "Hullo, Tim!" are the respective salutations that pass between my guide and the inhabitant of the barrel. They recognise one another.

"Who is that bloke?" and "Where did you prig them togs?" are the boy's first polite inquiries.

I am introduced.

"Oh, so you's in a 'reffidge,' are ye! and that's the gov? Well, you *are* a softy!" and with a look of immeasurable superiority and sovereign contempt, he creeps again into his temporary abode. He refuses further parley, saying, with a knowing shake of the head, "I prefers my freedom, I does!" He is homeless, has been for years on the streets, never having known his parents, and is an itinerant merchant of bootlaces; but, as he says, has had "ill-luck to-day," so, not having the needful twopence for a lodging, sleeps "out" for the night. How is this class to be got at? The new education scheme, with its industrial clauses, does not reach lads over thirteen years, and this boy is fourteen and a half, and is growing up a vagrant and a nuisance, body and soul alike the prey of every foul and unclean bird. I invite him to a free tea, promising him liberty to depart afterwards. With considerable hesitation, and all the air of conferring a favour, he says, "I'll think it over. P'raps I'll go, p'raps not." And with this I am forced to be content, bid him good-night, and pass on; but not before I have observed the significant wink he gives his companion, and heard the half-whistled sentence of "My eye! ain't he a green un?"

Having visited the savoury precincts of "The Change" and Petticoat Lane, disturbing in our course the weary and sleepy refugees of deserted fish-stalls, empty carts, and dark passages, we at last retrace our steps, and, after a little hesitation, and needful conference with a policeman, who recognises me, and promises to "keep an eye out" for us, we boldly plunge into the dreaded locality of Flower-and-Dean Street and its adjoining courts.

Lodging-house after lodging-house is visited. In one room upstairs are about twenty lads, who have lain down upon the floor in the rags in which they wandered about the streets in the day. The den is a filthy one, and infested with vermin, and my young companion shudders as he looks upon these boys, huddled together like pigs, and contrasts the comfort and cleanliness of our "Home," of which he is a happy inmate, with all this scene of wretchedness. The atmosphere of the room is stifling; the odours given out by the rags and unwashed bodies of the lads are most overpowering. Now they are all awake, the light of our lamp and the noise of our footsteps having disturbed their slumbers; and crowding around us, we have much trouble to find answers to their variously-put questions. At last we succeed in quelling the tumult, and eliciting in our turn the information we seek, our visit terminating in the selection of three of the most wretched-looking and woe-begone lads as future inmates of our Home.

Each of these three boys is parentless; not one of them possesses a home. When they can pick up a few coppers, they pay for a night's shelter, such as I then found them in. As yet none of them have stolen, but two have been in the "lock-up" for sleeping out. When washed and dressed

they look so different, that one can but desire that such a door of hope was opened to thousands of our Arab boys.

Much more we saw which space prevents recounting, but we hope to occasionally resume these peripatetic nightly visits to the various purlieus of our city, the haunts of boys deserted and forlorn, who are being gradually absorbed by and into the criminal classes, living in the almost unrecked-of security of their Alsatian abodes. That, through God's blessing, we may so succeed, by a little preparatory training, and by winning their hearts for Jesus, in fitting them for future usefulness in opening spheres, I firmly believe, and have but penned these few lines, dear reader, that you may think of and still pray for the constant objects of our care and sympathy. "Compassion upon the ignorant and upon them that are out of the way," the precious attribute of our great High Priest, is comely and attractive when exhibited, though but in feeble measure, in those who are so highly privileged as to be called, in virtue of association with Him, "a royal priesthood, a chosen nation."—*The Christian.*

AT A RAILWAY STATION.

At a railway station the other day, one of the beautiful lessons which all should learn was taught in such a natural simple way that none could forget it. It was a bleak, snowy day. The train was late, and the ladies' room dark and dreary. The dozen women, old and young, who sat waiting impatiently, all looked more or less cold, low-spirited, or wearied.

Just then a forlorn old woman, shaking with the palsy, came in with a basket of little wares for sale, and went about mutely offering them to the sitters. Nobody bought anything, and the poor old soul stood blinking at the door a minute, as if reluctant to go out into the bitter weather again. She turned presently, and stared about the room as if trying to find something; and then a pale lady in black, who sat as if asleep on a chair, opened her eyes, saw the old woman, and instantly asked in a kind tone, "Have you lost anything?"

"No, dear. I am lookin' for the heatin' place, to have a warm 'fore I go out agin. My eyes are bad, and I don't see the stove."

"Here it is," and the lady led her to it, to warm her feet.

"Well, now, ain't that nice?" said the old woman, holding her ragged mittens to dry. "Thanky, dear; this is very comfortable. I'm most froze to-day, bein' lame and aching; and not selling much made me very downhearted."

The lady smiled, went to the buffet, bought a cup of tea and some food, and carried it herself to the old woman, and said, as respectfully and kindly as if the poor soul had been dressed in silk and fur, "Won't you have a cup of hot tea? It's very comforting such a day as this."

"Deary me, but you are very good!" cried the old lady, in a tone of delight that made a smile go round the room, touching the glummest face like a streak of sunshine. "Well, this is warming," added the old lady,

sipping away with a relish. "That does my heart good." While she refreshed herself, telling her story meanwhile, the lady looked over the trifling little wares in the basket, bought soap, pins, and laces, and cheered the old soul by paying well for them.

As I watched her doing this I thought what a sweet face she had, though I at first considered her rather plain. I felt dreadfully ashamed of myself that I had grimly shaken my head when the basket was offered to me; and as I saw a look of interest, sympathy, and kindness come into the faces around me, I did wish that I had been the magician to call it out. It was only a kind word and a friendly act; but somehow it brightened that dingy room wonderfully. It changed the faces of a dozen women; and I think it touched a dozen hearts, for I saw many eyes follow the plain, pale lady with sudden respect; and when the old woman, with many thanks, got up to go, several persons beckoned to her and bought something, as if they wanted to repair their negligence.

This lady's kind act I am sure was not done for effect, and no possible earthly reward could be expected for it, except the thanks of a poor old woman. But that simple little deed of charity was as good as a sermon, and I think each traveller went on her way better for the half-hour in the dreary station.

Poet's Corner.

A CRY FOR TEACHERS.

WHENCE comes this holy, happy band,
  Pressing ever Zion-ward,
Bearing boldly in their hand
  The red-crossed banner of the Lord?

'Tis our band of ragged children,
  Saved by God from out the street,
Led, by grace, to trust in heaven,
  To sit and learn at Jesu's feet.

At the sight of Jesu's cross
  Laid they down their load of sin,
Counting all things only loss
  So that Jesus they might win.

Now, as they march to Zion,
  Long and loud their shouts they raise,
Rugged is the path they tread on,
  Yet they sing to Jesu's praise.

Oh, Christian men and women,
  Come and help this band to swell,
Come and point the way to heaven
  To those who still in darkness dwell.

Having drunk yourselves His grace,
Come and tell aloud its worth;
Drawing light from Jesu's face,
Shed it on the darkened earth.

From the streets and from the alleys
Of our rich and mighty city,
Dense as mist from watered valleys
Swells aloft their cry for pity.

Not in words, but yet expressed
By sad and saddening lives of sin,
Lives which never can be blest
While the poison dwells within.

Leave them, leave them not to die,
In the darkness of their night,
Come in answer to their cry,
Come and shed the gospel's light.

Come, depending on the Lord,
To bless the sowing of the seed,
Filled with knowledge of his word,
Give to those who knowledge need.

Say not, think not, "Thrown away
The hours that we thus should spend,"
You may not see the fruit to-day,
But you will gather in the end.

Those who carry precious grain,
Sowing it in tears with prayer,
When they heaven's shores shall gain,
Will find their sheaves await them there.

Come then, come and swell the band,
Marching ever Zion-ward,
Bearing open, in your hand,
The blood-sealed promise of the Lord.

Kilburn. L. S. B.

Teachers' Column.

PRESENT REWARDS.

BY THE REV. F. W. BROWN.

UNDOUBTEDLY the great reward for all faithful service and labour for God will be the crown of life in the better world, when the labour of earth is over, and the rest of heaven has come. But while the full reward will be bestowed then, God is pleased to give foretastes and earnests of that reward even here below. The faithful labourer for God not only may expect a blessing after his toil, but he

may expect a blessing in his labour, for God blesses those who honour him, and rewards them in the deed. The consideration of this fact should not be the mainspring of our labour for God; we ought to teach the children committed to our charge from love to the Saviour, who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not," and from love to the souls of the children he died to redeem. We ought to teach because the love of Christ constraineth us, and not from any mercenary considerations, not because of a present or future reward that may be given us; and yet, since God has seen fit to append a present and future reward to our work, we may receive it and rejoice, we may regard it as a stimulus to gladsome and grateful service—to induce us not to be weary in our well-doing, for in due time we shall reap if we faint not.

The first prize is *Divine Discipline.* Every true teacher is a disciple in the school of Christ. He knows and feels that it is impossible to teach others except he be taught himself. He therefore seeks preparation of head and heart; he gives himself to study and to prayer; he submits to Divine Discipline; he becomes an earnest student of the sacred Scriptures, and endeavours to become a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. He seeks for the aid of the Holy Spirit that he may see and know the Truth in its fulness and beauty, and that he may become wise to win souls. And, surely, the privilege of sitting at the feet of such a teacher, of graduating in such a school, of being disciplined in such a Divine art—surely, such improvement of our faculties, such enlargement of our powers, such elevation of our feelings and affections, consequent upon drill and discipline in so Divine a school, are a present reward—a reward infinitely beyond and above what our poor services deserve.

The second prize is *Divine Promises.* When we are prosecuting any secular enterprise, and undergoing any arduous toil, a promise of ample remuneration is regarded as a reward for the successful and satisfactory way in which the work is being done; and if with the promise we receive an earnest of what shall be fully given in the end, and if we have faith in the ability and willingness of the Promise-maker to keep His word, we work as if the whole reward had been fully given, and cheerfully endure to the end. God's promises are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus. To the Ragged-school teacher are given exceeding great and precious promises, and of all the promises God gives us earnest here. We get foretastes of the rest, and joy, and peace laid up for us in heaven; we get glimpses of the glory to be hereafter revealed. Surely such promises paid now in part, and so certain of fulfilment, are a present reward for every true worker in the vineyard of the Lord.

The third prize is *Divine Honour.* Every Sunday-school teacher is a servant of the King of kings and Lord of lords; and not merely a servant, but a co-worker with God. He calls us not servants but friends, thus putting upon our service the highest possible honour. To teach a class in a Sunday-school would not be an act of condescension for a king upon his throne. If he came down to teach, he would not really be going down, but *up*, for any mortal being is going up when he goes to do any work for God. If every Sunday-school teacher rightly discharged his duties, and rightly understood his position, he would feel that he had a present reward in his work in the honour conferred upon him in being permitted to stand in the stead of Christ, and beseech the children to be reconciled to God. What sacrifices men will often make, and efforts they will put forth to gain earthly honour, merely to win a fading name, and wear a withering laurel; and if only the honour can be won, the winner thanks his friends, and declares that he is amply repaid for all the costs and pains. Before the honour

of working for and *with* God, all mere earthly honour pales away; before the prize of a place in the ministry of God, all earthly prizes are of little worth. Such honour—such a reward—is even now for every true Sunday-school teacher to aspire for, and enjoy.

The fourth prize is *Divine Approbation*. God has so constituted us, that we thirst for and enjoy the approbation of our fellow-men. No right-minded man can be wholly indifferent to the opinion of good and intelligent men, and if we do any work for a person whom we greatly respect and love, the best reward we can have is the satisfaction and approbation of the person we have benefited. In our work for God, in our teaching in the Sunday-school, if we do the work sincerely, and prayerfully, and heartily, we have the smile of God, we please *Him;* and to know that we are permitted to do anything to please God, to win the approbation of the great Master, ought to be a reward sufficient and satisfactory for the most arduous and protracted service. Our "well-doing," may even now be crowned with God's own "well done," and our work of faith and labour of love may even now receive a glorious reward.

FRUITS OF PRAYER.

I ASKED, "Do you think that the Lord will let me see in this life the salvation of the souls for whom I pray?"

"I cannot say as to that," was the reply. "When I was a child in the Sabbath School my faithful teacher used to say: 'I have prayed too much for my class for one of them to be lost.' I was a thoughtless girl at the time, and remember wondering at it, and thinking it a very self-confident remark. She was so sure. 'I shall have them all,' she would say; 'I shall say to Christ at the judgment: Here am I and the class Thou hast given me.'"

"And were they all converted?" I asked.

"Yes; she did not live to see it, but my eyes have seen it—the last of the sixteen gathered into the fold."—*Sunday School Times.*

Children's Gallery.

A BUNCH OF FLOWERS.

POOR lame Jennie sat at her window, looking out upon the dismal narrow street, with a look of pain and weariness on her face. "Oh dear," she said, with a sigh, "what a long day this is going to be!" and she looked wistfully up the street. Suddenly she leaned forward and pressed her little pale face against the glass, as a rosy-cheeked boy came racing down the street, swinging his school-books by the strap. Looking up at the window, he took off his cap and bowed with a bright, pleasant smile. "What a nice boy he is!" said Jennie to herself, as he ran out of sight. "I am glad he goes by here when he goes to school, he looks so happy; and when he smiles it seems like having sunshine. I wish everybody who goes by would look up and smile."

"Mamma," said George West, as he came home from school, "I can't help thinking about that poor little girl that always sits at the window, she looks so tired. To-day, when I went by, I pitied her so that I took off my cap and bowed to her, and she smiled, and watched me away down the street. I wish I could do something for her," he continued, looking up into his mother's face.

"You did something for her to-day, if you made her smile," said his mother. "But suppose you should carry her a handful of flowers sometimes when you go to school."

"I'll do that to-morrow morning,"

said George, "if I can find the way into that rickety old house."

The next morning, as Jennie sat leaning her head wearily against the window, watching the raindrops chasing each other down the glass, and the little dirty brook running down the street, she spied George carefully picking his way across the street with a handful of such beautiful flowers it almost took away her breath. He stopped in front of the window, and, smiling pleasantly, said, "How shall I find the way to your room?"

Jennie pointed to an alley near by, where he turned in, and with some difficulty found his way up the dingy staircase. Opening the door to Jennie's gentle "Come in," he said, "I have brought you a little handful of flowers to look at this rainy day."

"Are they for me?" exclaimed Jennie, clasping her hands in delight. "How kind you are," she continued, as George laid them in her lap; "I have not had a flower since we lived in the city."

"Did you once live in the country?" said George.

"Oh yes," answered Jennie; "we used to live in a beautiful cottage, and there were trees and flowers and green grass, and the air was so sweet."

"Well, what made you move here?" asked George, growing interested.

"Oh," said Jennie, softly, "papa died, and mamma was ill so long, and the money was all gone, and mamma had to sell the cottage, and she moved here to try to get work to do."

"Do you have to sit here all day?" asked George, glancing around at the bare room and out into the dismal street.

"Yes," said Jennie, "because I am lame; but I would not mind that if I could only help mamma."

"I declare, it's too bad," said George, who dreaded nothing so much as being obliged to stay in the house.

"Oh no, it isn't," said Jennie, pleasantly; "mamma says we might forget Jesus if we had everything we wanted, and he never forgets us, you know. Just think how good it was for him to send me these beautiful flowers to-day," she continued, laying them against her face.

"How do you make that out," said George, looking very much surprised, "when I brought them myself?"

"Oh, he made you think of it," answered Jennie, "because it is such a dark day, and he thought I'd want something to look at."

"Well, I must run to school," said George, not knowing exactly what to say next; and taking two or three stairs at a bound, he was soon out of Jennie's sight. But he had a happy little corner in his heart, because he had tried to do a kind act. He did not know how much good he had done in making a pleasant day out of a dreary one for a little sick girl. "Mamma," said George that evening, after he had told her what Jennie said, "papa must give them some money, so that they can go back to their home."

"No," said his mother, "he could not do that, and they would not wish him to do so; but perhaps he can contrive some way to help them, so that they can live in a pleasanter place."

"I am going to carry Jennie some of the grapes grandpa sent me, to-morrow," said George, turning over his geography.

"I will put some of my pears into your basket, and go with you," said his mother; "but there is one thing we can always give, and sometimes it does more good than nice things to eat, or even money."

"Is it smiles, mamma?" asked George, looking up.

"Yes," answered his mother, giving him a kiss; "and it is a good plan to throw in a kind word or two with them where you can. It is indeed a privilege if by any means we can make another happier. May you, my boy, never pass a day without doing so! Ask our precious Jesus to show you what he would have you do; it is very sweet to do little things for our Saviour. We love him because he first loved us."

ELLA.

Correspondence.

A GREETING FROM AMERICA.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

My dear Sir,—I am requested by my fellow-labourers in this mission to write in regard to having your Ragged School Union Magazine forwarded to us regularly. I find one volume in our library, for 1862. I will leave it with you to do the best you can for us in regard to price, &c.

We are watching with deep and prayerful interest your wonderful progress in the *great metropolis* of my *native land*. God speed the Ragged School Union!

Ours is the same work under another name. We, like yourselves, are blessed with *noble men* as a board of managers, and devoted teachers who are all females of the right stamp.

I will forward the amount of postage, &c., as soon as I know what it is. Hoping to have a line from you, I am, &c.,

Howard Mission, New York, Sept. 27, 1872. Charles Cook.

[We need scarcely say that the Committee of the Ragged School Union reciprocated the good wishes of their American cousins, and most readily complied with their request free of cost.—Ed.]

Facts and Scraps.

Public House New Licensing Act.—A series of valuable returns have been collected by the police from more than 200 towns as to the working of the new Licensing Act. They show that in nine-tenths of the places reported upon the hours specified in the Act were adopted; that almost without exception the new law had given satisfaction; that it has lightened the duties of the night police; and that the streets are clear much earlier than they used to be. Numerous incidental advantages are recorded. It is observed in some places that workmen go earlier to bed, and are more regular in beginning work next morning. In mining districts, where the hardest drinking was generally done after 12 p.m., the miners are saving money perforce. As a class, the publicans are growing not only tolerant of the Act, but favourable.

British Drunkenness.—A parliamentary return on drunkenness, just issued, shows that, in the year ending on the 1st of July, 1871, there were in the United Kingdom 238,274 convictions under the heading of "drunk" or "drunk and disorderly"; of these, 130,785 were in England, 15,194 in Scotland, and 92,295 in Ireland. The "Emerald Isle" is still to the fore in the matter of intoxication. In the number of second convictions it is ahead of England; while in the number of third and fourth convictions it is more than three times the whole of that of England and Scotland! The officers making the returns in Ireland

lay the blame of these startling facts to the inferior quality of the liquor—a truly Hibernian attempt to whitewash a moral stain.

How Paupers are Buried.—At an inquest held in Whitechapel the jury called attention to the disgraceful state of the shells in which paupers were buried. One gentleman said that they were nothing better than egg-boxes painted black, and he wished to know how much longer such a state of things was to last? Another juryman said that he had served on many coroner's inquiries in the district, and always found the shells in the same horrible condition, and it was a great wonder that the weight of the bodies did not break through the rotten boards. The coroner acquiesced in what had been said, and a resolution was passed to make a complaint to the parish authorities forthwith.

Pauperism.—In the half-year ending at Michaelmas, 1871, the expenditure from the rates on relief of the poor in England and Wales amounted to £2,530,797, an increase of 1·3 per cent. over the corresponding half of the preceding year, £707,297 being expended on in-maintenance, and £1,823,500 on out-door relief. The average price of wheat for the half-year rose from 47s. 8d. per quarter in 1870 to 58s. 4d. in 1871 Mutton and beef also showed a considerable rise in price. The average weekly cost per head of paupers in the workhouse, for clothing, food, and necessaries, ranged from 2s. 1¾d. at Helston and at Redruth to 6s. 5¾d. in St. George's, Hanover Square.

Notice of Meeting.

BLENHEIM ROAD, ISLINGTON.

The anniversary services in connection with this mission, which is an offshoot of Park Chapel, Crouch End, were held at the latter place of worship on Sunday, September 29. The Rev. J. P. Gladstone preached morning and evening. At Blenheim Road Chapel, in the afternoon, an address was delivered to the children of the Sunday School, and a special service was held in the evening.

On Tuesday evening last a public meeting was held in Blenheim Road Chapel, at which the Rev. J. P. Gladstone presided. There was a large attendance. The hall was beautifully decorated with flags, evergreens, and appropriate mottoes and Scripture texts, and presented a festive appearance. After the usual devotional exercises, the Chairman opened the proceedings in a brief address, expatiating on the importance of establishing mission-halls and Ragged Schools in outlying and neglected districts, as developing the true missionary spirit, and facilitating the ingathering of the people.

Mr. Bayley, the secretary, stated that this hall was opened for worship three years since, and had been under the charge of the Rev. W. J. Holder for the past two years. There had been a steady and gratifying increase in all the operations of the mission. In the Sunday School the average attendance was 112 for the first year, 141 last year, and 155 at the present time. A Night School for boys and girls had been established, and had met with great success. Mothers' Meetings, Dorcas Societies, and other agencies had been carried on with a gratifying amount of success. Fresh agencies would be established as funds permitted, and shortly a Working Men's Institute would be opened.

Papers, Original and Selected.

RAGGED SCHOOL SENIOR BIBLE CLASSES.

PROBABLY there has been no age when those twin-foes to God and man, Popery and Rationalism, were so aggressive. At the first glance, they appear antagonistic, yet, after all, they are really based on one and the same principle—namely, the deification of human reason. For, whilst one places the dogmas of a so-called "infallible" pope above the Bible, the other supersedes it by the "intuitions" or rather crotchets of philosophers.

It is essential, then, to the maintenance of the Bible in its true position as the sole authority for any Christian doctrine, that the youth of England should thoroughly learn the evidences for the validity of Holy Writ—in other words, "the why and the wherefore" of their belief. For in this way alone will they be able to "give a reason for the hope which is in them," and so be protected from *mis*belief on the one hand, and from *un*belief on the other.

If this is the case with youth at large, how much more needful is it with the senior scholars in Ragged Schools. For, if they do not learn the rudiments of Divine truth in our schools, with dissipated or negligent parents, they cannot be expected to acquire them at home. For even when their parents, like Lot in Sodom, are not themselves corrupt, the moral surroundings are such that it is almost by a miracle that they can escape from such contaminating influences. Need we say that gambling, swearing, drunkenness, and kindred sins, are dominant in such districts? If, then, so many have escaped those corruptions, may we not mainly ascribe it, under God, to those Ragged Schools whose primary object for the last thirty years has been to train neglected or destitute children for Heaven?

Judging from recent controversies, it would seem that some persons imagine that, contented with gathering about 30,000 scholars into our Sunday and week-day schools, we are altogether careless of their future. Now nothing can give a falser view of our position. The mere fact that for about twenty years the Ragged School Union has given prizes for good service, refutes this sup-

position. Thus encouraging them to fight the great battle of life at its very outset, our scholars are never lost sight of by their earnest teachers, but by "old scholars' meetings," and similar agencies, they are kept under good influence until the character is fully formed.

But not content with this, which, after all, is but a secondary object, their spiritual interests are steadily watched over. For the question presses home to every thoughtful teacher — how can scholars be kept in the Ragged School when too old for the Sunday School class? If they sit with mere children, they are exposed to the scoffs and jeers of the boys and girls in the same workshop, and thus many have escaped religious influence at the most critical period of life. What, then, is wanted is a link between the School and the Church, where, under the charge of an earnest teacher, they shall find a true pastor, though without the name.

This link is fully supplied by Senior Bible Classes. They are conducted where possible in separate rooms; in other cases, dwarf wooden screens, or curtains, separate them from the more juvenile scholars, and make the distinction required by their different ages and wants.

We are glad to indicate that there are *fifty-four* Senior Bible Classes, in about one-third of the Sunday Schools connected with the Union. The aggregate membership is 1,343; giving an average attendance of nearly 25.

The mode of conducting such classes, of course, varies. Some teachers go through one of the Gospels consecutively, and thus the whole body of Scripture doctrine and precept comes under review, in the order arranged by the Holy Spirit. Others prefer to take up subjects announced on the previous Sunday; the members of the class being encouraged to find out illustrations or parallel passages during the week. The members are invariably pressed to submit their doubts or difficulties to the conductor of the class, so that, if possible, they may be removed. Some teachers ask their scholars to repeat a text separately before the regular lesson; and all begin their exercises with prayer. But, whatever plan is adopted, the rule is to be as little stereotyped as possible; and we doubt not that all find in the sequel the truth of the axiom of the Master, "Wisdom is justified of her children."

It is scarcely needful to indicate how pastoral is the relation of such teachers to their classes. For they enter fully into the joys

and the sorrows of every member. Not rarely they correspond with the members of their class in rotation, and find no difficulty in getting answers, which are treasured up for future reference. They visit them statedly at their homes; and not rarely introduce them to masters or mistresses. Often, they are the sole *confidantes* of their spiritual secrets; and, ever praying for them by *name* and not *en masse*, they are thus brought before God in detail. In so doing, indeed, such teachers but copy the example of the Jewish High Priest, who bore the names of the twelve tribes on the breastplate, and thus practically ever prayed for them by name.

Nor can another benefit incident to Senior Bible Classes be omitted—namely, that the members find in such classes like-minded companions. This is of no mean importance at a most impressionable period of life. For as are his companions, so is the youth. This fact is painfully confirmed by the career of King Rehoboam; for if we want to know why he was such a type of that worst of fools, a royal one, we find it in the "young men that were grown up with him" (1 Kings xii. 8), and so were, through the infatuation of his father, the companions of his youth. So, in the bright contrast of this picture, we are inclined to ascribe much of the nobility of the character of his grandfather, King David, to his early friendship with the illustrious prince royal of Israel, Jonathan.

Another of the practical benefits of Senior Bible Classes is the way in which they act as a link between the school and the teacher's chair. Most superintendents resort to them in emergencies, and ask the conductors to select the fittest scholars to supply occasional vacancies. It is mainly from such classes that teachers, once scholars, are drawn. Last May, 230 of such teachers were reported, showing how reproductive Senior Classes have been. Many of them we have seen at work, and always with great delight. For they are models of punctuality and patience; and from personal experience they know how best to unlock the heart.

One other fact in connection with such classes cannot be omitted from our brief sketch—namely, how Bible Classss have acted as a nursery for the Church. The bulk of the 239 communicants reported by forty Ragged Schools doubtless entered the visible Church through such classes. Most of these were led by the Holy Spirit to surrender their hearts to Jesus, by "line upon line, precept upon

precept," rather than by any sudden impulse. Prayed *for*, and prayed *with*, by teachers who were not content with mere moral or social improvement, their earnest counsels, both public and private, were at last crowned by that success which ever awaits those who are "wise to win souls."

Enough has now been recorded to show how important is the bearing of Senior Bible Classes on our elder scholars. Hence we consider that no Ragged School is complete without such an agency. If no higher good springs out of them, we at least keep watch over our scholars at the very outset of life. But more than this, we may expect to see, in an age of infidelity and superstition, many emerge from them intelligent Christians who not only believe, but *know* what, and *why* they believe. Thus, at last, gauging the future by the past, we doubt not it will be said of myriads at Christ's second advent, "This and that man was born there!"

PERSONAL EFFORT.

BY THE REV. HUGH MACMILLAN.

This is the age of associations; individual effort is in a large manner superseded by corporate action. We do nearly all our good by committees and societies. Many, feeling unable altogether to escape from the responsibility of doing something for the cause of Christ, pay others to act as their substitutes; and thus organisations are necessitated to accomplish mechanically, as it were, what can only be done effectually by individual effort.

Such organisations no doubt accomplish a vast amount of good, and it is not to easy to see how, in the present state of society, they could safely be abolished.

But it must be acknowledged by all who have thought deeply upon the subject, that Christian work has been too exclusively directed into this channel, and that it would be well if, along with this concerted action, there were more of spontaneous and intelligent individual exertion. What the world needs more than anything else—more than gifts of money, rules, speeches, theories, organisations—is the revival of personal agency; the touch of a hand, the glance of an eye, the tone of a voice, the sympathy of warm, loving hearts, charged with all healing influences, to sow the desolate wilderness thickly with the good seed of the Kingdom.

We wish the sower to go forth alone, and, by individual contact with the evil of the world, to remedy it by the influence of personal faith and living love. Like Elijah, we want the servant of Christ to lay his own living body, through sympathy, upon the dead body of suffering sin; and thus, by imparting warmth to it, prepare it for restoration to spiritual life. Like a greater than Elijah, who identified Himself with the outcasts of society, and said, "Zaccheus, come down, for to-day I must abide at thy house," we

want every Christian, who is a debtor to all men, to go home with the poor and the ignorant, and make their trials his own, that thus he may truly relieve and bless them.

It is required that there should be a real crucifixion of the flesh in the blessed labours of the cross. Such sowing would do far more good than any other agency. He that sows and he that reaps in such a case would rejoice together in the harvest.

IRISH RAGGED SCHOOLS.

A WRITER in the *British Messenger* gives the following sketch of the famous Irish Mission Schools. Some are called Ragged Schools, others are known as "Mission Schools;" but, whatever their name, they are intended solely for the same class as those who attend the English Ragged Schools. Happily, they are not only thronged, but have done more than any other machinery to gospelise that beautiful but unhappy country, so long trodden under the iron hoof a priesthood which is ultramontane to the core.

The writer says that it is in the Mission School that all hopes for the future of Ireland are placed. The sphere of its activity is limited, for much has to be overcome before a parent allows a child to be sent to it, or the priest allows the child to remain. Relatively to the bulk of the Roman Catholic population, the Mission School children are very small, but their education has an influence out of all proportion to their numbers. The children with whom they come into daily contact are affected by them, by the hymns they sing (and which to an Irish ear are so easy and tempting to pick up), by what they can repeat from the Bible, by the serious earnestness of many of them. None but those to whom the Bible is a sealed book can understand the eagerness with which its stories, and also doctrines, will be heard even by children. All the children of the Mission School do not turn out Protestants; very many of them do not; and many of those who do are forced by pressure of social persecution, or by the wish for entire freedom, to emigrate to America. There is thus a further narrowing of the influence of the school. Yet when every deduction is made, there remains a large number of Roman Catholics in the country who have received a Scriptural education, and that number is always on the increase. These men and women are acting sensibly on their neighbours, and the Word of God is often acting powerfully on them, and in the education of their own children they are naturally anxious to secure all the advantage they reaped themselves. Education alone has produced remarkable changes in the country. But it is to the Christian education that we must look for more thorough changes; not merely for greater intelligence, lessened bigotry, and independence of the priest, but for the conviction of truth and the inquiry that is stimulated by the Word of God.

The largest Mission Schools in Ireland are those of the Irish Church Missions, and the impression they uniformly produce upon strangers is of the great hold they have upon the children, and the admirable way in which the children are led to grasp the meaning of the Bible and its bearing upon the great doctrines at issue between the Roman and Protestant Church. They answer for themselves, and with a wonderful readiness and keenness.

"Which is the saddest chapter in the Bible?" a visitor asked this spring, thinking of the fall. "The fifty-third of Isaiah," a child replied, thinking of Christ.

Dr. Tyny of New York was asking lately in a Connaught school about the way to heaven. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," the voices shouted in chorus. "But I don't like that way, I'm determined to go by my own good works." "If Abraham," he was answered, "were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God." "Well, but I mean to do more and better works than Abraham." "Sir," said a boy, "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight, and sure your honour is flesh." "Well, then, what must I do to get to heaven?" A little ragged fellow, whose knees were out of his trousers, replied, "*Your honour must go on board the Lord Jesus Christ, and stick to him.*" "What is the difference between going to New York in a ship and going on board the Lord Jesus Christ?" "Sir, if you go on board a ship to go to New York, you may never get there; but if you go on board the Lord Jesus Christ to heaven, you are sure to get there." "And how am I sure?" "If you go on board a ship she may be wrecked, but the Lord Jesus can never be wrecked."

In another school, as they were reading of the Pharisee and the publican, "Tell me," said Dr. Tyny, "how it is that the righteousness of Jesus justifies the believing man." After a little, a boy replied, "Why, the righteousness of Jesus covers up our righteousness." "But you told me we have no righteousness." They were puzzled. At last a little girl of not more than ten lifted up her head, and said, "Sir, I can tell." "Well, two letters will settle the whole thing." "I know what they are," she said; "they are *u* and *n*. The righteousness of Jesus must cover up our unrighteousness."

When thinking of such answers, it is not wonderful to hear how such children die. A little fellow known as Johnny came to one of the Dublin schools about two years ago. His brother sickened and died, and during the illness Johnny would say to him, "Don't be afraid, Josey, Jesus may soon call me to be with you." The time soon came, and he died in April. One day, shortly before, he pointed with his wasted, feeble hand to a text on the wall: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." But he said, "I am not a bit afraid." "Why?" "Jesus has taken the fear away from me; he will keep me safe; the Son of man is come to seek and save that which was lost." Herbert was a playfellow who had died, and he asked, "When I go to Jesus what will I say you told me to say to little Herbert?" He added, "I'm soon going to see Josey and him." Some one asked him then how he felt. "I feel tired; but Jesus tells me if I come to him, he will give me rest."

We may well, then, with fruits like these, wish "godspeed" to the conductors of these Ragged and Mission Schools. For, surely, if Ireland is ever to regain its ancient name, "the Isle of Saints," it must be by its children being leavened with Gospel doctrine and Bible principles. Then will its sons go forth, as in the days of holy Columba of Iona, to evangelise regions now sunk in a spiritual darkness "which may be felt."

Funeral Sermon

ON THE

LATE COUNTESS OF SHAFTESBURY.

THE following is an outline of the funeral sermon on the late Countess of Shaftesbury, preached by the Rev. J. W. Reeve at Portman Episcopal Chapel, on Sunday, October 20th. The sermon was founded on John xviii. 11:—"The cup which my Father hath given me shall I not drink it?" Mr. Reeve divided his text into two heads—the Circumstances and the Lessons. The "cup" was, he said, a cup of suffering, the depth of which was beyond our grasp—not the suffering of mere corporeal pain, but that of the curse of the law of God for our sins. Let each one consider his interest in that cup, and in view of these words, consider it with thankful heart, for, if He had not drunk it, we must have done so. Consider also the willingness with which it was drunk, and try to enter into the depth of the love which prompted this willingness. Who administered it? "My Father." After expatiating also on the *necessity* to men's salvation and God's glory conveyed by the expressive words, "Shall I not drink it?" he passed to the Lessons. God's people had also a cup of trial to drink according as He sees good; but the cup which Christ drank had taken the sting from ours. Ours might indeed be bitter, but only as a medicine, the purpose of which was to heal, not to hurt. It was in trial that the Lord specially showed himself, turning darkness into light. His treatment was that of a loving father to the children of his love, and the medicine He gave could have no mistake in its ingredients, and was sure to be salutary. Did we seek for the reasons of this discipline of trial? They were to be found in the foreordained will that His delights should be with the sons of men, and in His purpose to fit us for His delight; thus He worked within us a meetness to live with Him. Inferior and human motives might, he went on to say, enable men to endure trial, and even from pride men might be as salamanders in the fire of affliction, but grace alone could enable a man to endure for Christ.

Another lesson to be drawn from the text was that, while we should all strive to learn submission to our Father's will, we are called to sympathise with those in suffering, and I think it will scarcely be regarded as departing from my ordinary habit in such matters if I remind you of the deep and unexpected affliction into which one who worships here, has this week been plunged, one whom we all love and honour, not only for the sympathy he has ever shown in the sorrows and sufferings of others, and for his efforts to relieve them, but also for the readiness with which he has ever come to our help in promoting the benevolent objects in our district. The Lord has laid His hand upon him and touched him in the tenderest part. He has taken away "the desire of his eyes." The blow is most severe—how severe, only

you know who have lost a wife whom you tenderly loved. Still we know the blow has come from a loving hand, though those close ties which God has woven between hearts He unites are not severed without deep suffering; so we are called to sympathise with our afflicted brother. Do you ask, how can I show my sympathy? I answer, by prayer, by carrying him and his family to a throne of grace, and saying, "Lord comfort them, Lord bless them, strengthen them, sustain them, enable them to understand better than they have ever done the value of the Gospel. Now let them know what thou canst do; how thou canst soothe the sorrowing heart, canst dry those tears that loving hearts shed, canst give submission to thy will, canst bind up the broken heart, canst whisper peace to the soul, canst light up with believing joy the troubled mind, and enable them to use thine own words, 'Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.'" This is the best form for our sympathy to take—in this way we may call down blessings on the afflicted and be ourselves blessed too.

We have to thank the Lord that He has given to this bereaved family the richest consolation in the testimony she has left behind. Not only can they remember her in all the relations of wife and mother with grateful love, but also with the deepest thankfulness as a humble and sincere believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. God has His children in all ranks, among the noble as well as amongst the lowly-born. In this sense He is "no respecter of persons." He sees many a meek and lowly heart where such are often doubted. He sees many a heart glowing with love to Christ where others suspect only love of the world. So often are others misunderstood and misrepresented too. Those who knew her best say hers was not a mere death-bed repentance, but rather the completion of a life, in which the disposition was generous, unselfish, considerate, forbearing, and forgiving to man, in which the heart was loving and obedient to God; and all arising from a simple, clear, firm faith in Christ—a faith which deeply understood her own unworthiness before God, which rested all on the infinite merits of her precious Saviour, and which especially loved the thought of His appearing. Her frequent exclamation during her illness was "None but Christ, none but Christ." She delighted in the hymn, "Just as I am, without one plea," &c., and the very last words, which she with difficulty uttered in broken syllables were, "O Lamb of God, I come."

Why do I say these things? Not to praise the dead—she is far beyond that—but to encourage the living, and to magnify the riches of God's grace, which, through all the difficulties of every station in life, "can form a people for His praise." This is the point I would fasten on your minds, not so much what and who she was here, as what and who and where she is now. It is true we read, "not many noble are called;" but, thanks be to God, it is not said "not any." They may be few, as it is in all classes, but there are some, and in this we will rejoice. And while we humbly and heartily thank God for the grace bestowed on her who is taken, we may confidently trust the same Lord for the salvation you and I need. When we hear of His grace to others we are privileged to remember there is the same grace for us, the same large, bountiful hand to give, animated by the same merciful,

forgiving, loving heart, so that like the Galatians and Paul we may glorify God in her.

And for him who is left—what can I say? Though "cast down he is not destroyed;" though he feels deeply he trusts simply. So let it be our prayer that he may be so "exercised" by this affliction that it may "yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness to him," that he may feel hour by hour that though the Lord smites He also heals, though He tears He also binds up. Let us pray that he may have the comfort of believing that the Lord is with him—we can ask no more—that he may have grace to be submissive to God's holy will, and to acknowledge His infinite wisdom and goodness in this dispensation, and that the time which may still remain to him here may be spent, not in repining or sorrowing over the past, but in grateful remembrance of the mercies of God, in diligence in His service, and in the faith and love of His blessed Son, until in God's good time an "entrance shall be ministered unto him abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

MILE-END MEDICAL MISSION.

A "Free Gospel Mission" has perhaps nothing new in it, but the word "Medical" may catch the eye of some, and lead them to ask "What is a Medical Mission?"

In thousands of homes in East London—if the word home may be used to designate the dens in which the people live—God and the Bible have no place; the parents of the children are drunken and careless, the children grow up in the midst of vice and immorality. Every channel of reaching this class seems closed except when illness comes to the family: then advice must be sought; for even when the mother's love has grown cold, if the child fall sick that love will revive, and the little one, who has almost forgotten what it is to nestle in a mother's breast, is tenderly carried to the doctor. Here then is our opportunity, and what we hope will be the blessed work of this Mile-End Mission, when, either in the Gospel address given at the dispensary to the patients assembled there before they are prescribed for, in visiting the sick one at home, or in the loving care and attention of the Bible-nurse, to point to Him who "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses."

We are accustomed to hear a great deal about sickness among the poor and to feel some compassion for them; but can we realise the suffering they undergo? Truly, sickness brings discomfort enough to the rich, with their downy beds and quiet rooms, their tempting delicacies and the daily visit of a kind and well-known physician; but what is it in the draughty attic or smoky cellar, with scant clothing, coarse food, impure air and water, noisy children, and no cordial at hand but the gin which brings fever, misery, despair, and death?

The premises taken by the committee of the Mile End Gospel Medical Mission are situated in the great thoroughfare of East London; they are roomy, and well adapted for the purpose of the mission. On the ground

floor is a large hall, the dispensary, a consulting-room, and a boiler-room, in which a large copper is fitted for soup-making; upstairs is a large committee-room and apartments for the housekeeper. In front is a wide stretch of waste ground running between the houses and the roadway, where on Sundays and on every evening in the week the open-air preacher, the Temperance orator, or the infidel lecturer, may be heard addressing hundreds who are drawn from the crowd of wayfarers.

At the rear of the houses, on either side of the road, a number of narrow streets and courts intersect one another, with a teeming population whose families are but rarely free from disease and poverty. We fear that to these the ministers of Christ, City Missionary, or Bible-woman, but seldom have access. On the other hand, the doctor is a common friend in time of need, and with willingness and alacrity he is guided to the house he seeks.

The premises have been visited by Dr. Burns Thompson, of the Edinburgh Medical Missionary and Training Institution, which has been in operation for many years, and has sent abroad some forty medical missionaries; and also by Dr. Saunders, C.B., Superintendent of the London Medical Mission, and both expressed their hearty sympathy in the objects of the mission.

About fifty of those who regarded not God, and would none of His ways, have, through Divine grace, and the agency of this Mission, forsaken their evil ways. Two cases of special interest may be named:—

William B., a fine lad of seventeen years, an only child, with pious parents, had sunk very deeply into sin. He was an apprentice to a carpenter, and, while there, became acquainted with evil companions, who led him into taking his master's property. The policeman came to the house, and the mother told him the simple story. William, arriving at this moment, was taken into custody, and remained at Clerkenwell for several weeks until the trial came on. The heartbroken parents waited the long day in prayers and tears; one of our committee remained with them to cheer them and comfort, and, if possible to help, and about two hours before the trial came on said to the mother, "Now, Mrs. B., since I have been sitting here this morning I have made your son's case a matter of earnest prayer, and you need not to be alarmed, for the Lord has given me the assurance that he shall not go to prison. When the case came forward, which was the last that day, the judge sentenced him to "three months' imprisonment with hard labour." Our friend then stood up and pleaded for the lad, and promised if his lordship would kindly let him off, every effort should be used to prevent his appearance there again. The judge listened patiently, and replied, "Well, it is very kind of you, sir, but will you enter into your own recognisances for £10 to bring him forward again if we should require him?" This being promised, William was set free. Not many words were spoken to him, only a few of caution and hope. He appeared in our Mission Hall regularly every evening, and one Sunday he sought admission to the house of the friend who had delivered him, and there, on his knees, he gave his heart to the Lord. We then got him apprenticed to the sea for three years, and he is now on his voyage, and writes home with a heart full of gratitude for what has been done for him, and is now serving God and his country instead of Satan and

the prison. His poor mother, who had been ill for a long time, became worse by this shock, but, by the Lord's blessing upon the advice given at our Medical Mission, she has been fully restored, and she, with her husband, are now constant attendants at the Mission Services.

The next case was that of a young atheist, whose sainted mother died with every prayer for her prodigal son unanswered. He would at times come direct from the infidel lecture hall into the presence of his mother, while she was in the act of praying for him. He would rave, and stamp, and boldly forbid her doing so; but her petitions rose to heaven, intensified by his very opposition, and her death last August caused him some reflection, which, however, resulted only in a disposition to commit suicide, and on London Bridge the terrible thought was in his heart, but a second thought came: "Suppose, after all, there should be any hereafter." He turned, and, as he went home, he heard the preaching outside our hall. On the Sunday evening he came—the Lord met him. At the after meeting he gave himself unreservedly to the Lord, and is now a meek and humble follower of Jesus, and stated at our "New Converts' Tea Meeting," when he gave his experience, that he would not exchange the joy he then possessed for the whole world. Since then he has had a very narrow escape of being killed, and in gratitude for the Lord's goodness he has had his will made, leaving what few pounds he had saved to our Mission.

REST FOR WEARY WORKERS.—NO. II.

1872.

The simple but effective plan of affording our wearied teachers an additional week's rest and quiet in the country, must be familiar to most of our readers. Initiated four years ago by the popular authoress A. L. O. E., it has continued its health-giving benefits during the summer months of each succeeding year. Her last appeal will be found *ante* p. 53.

As the almoners of the kind help given by generous friends, it becomes our duty once more to give an account of our stewardship for the season just closed.

Through the inclemency of the weather the season had somewhat advanced before any teachers could get away to enjoy the change. This will account for slightly diminished numbers as compared with those of last year. The total number of teachers who have had the benefit of the change and rest is fifty-one. The funds, which have been, we are glad to say, adequate to the necessities, are most gratefully acknowledged.

Letters expressive of gratitude and of benefits derived, have been received from the teachers, but our space will only admit of a few extracts.

E. W.—"After spending a very happy week 'amid meadows green and pastures new,' I leave with regret. The days have passed too quickly, but I already feel much refreshed. No one can be more grateful than myself for the thoughtfulness and care of those who have remembered the 'Weary Workers.'"

G. E. E.—"We thank you for the very nice change of air and week's rest we have so much enjoyed at Holmwood. The cottage is charmingly situated. During our stay we visited the pretty village of Cold Harbour, with its church and churchyard. We ascended Leith Hill, from whence we had a fine view of the surrounding country. The Rev. E. D. Wickham very kindly invited us to walk in his garden. We never spent anywhere a more pleasant week."

H. F. M. and M. A. R.—"We very much enjoyed the week's rest with the happy family at Bracknell, for we were really 'Weary Workers.' Many thanks to the kind friends who help to provide such a quiet retreat, and to you for inviting us to enjoy it."

J. T.—"My week was a delightful one. The work in the School at present seems trifling to what it was before I went to Holmwood."

L. M.—"We have derived great benefit from our week's rest and change, and enjoyed it exceedingly."

R. P.—"Holmwood seemed more beautiful than ever. You may judge what the pleasure was to us after the severe trials and struggles we have gone through lately."

E. J.—"As far as my indifferent health would admit, I thoroughly enjoyed my stay at Bracknell. I shall ever feel grateful to you, and all those who are the promoters and supporters of such a good cause."

J. W. K.—"I never found such a relief from toil as I did when enjoying the fresh air last week at Bracknell. I quite think it has prevented my having a long illness."

These brief notices would be incomplete without a reference to the sympathy which, in a few cases, A. L. O. E.'s proposition has evoked. Several friends have generously offered to entertain teachers at their homes; and, although from the distance and other causes, it has not in every case been practicable, nevertheless, the kind feeling which prompted the offers merit our warmest thanks. Honourable mention must be made of one instance where two aged teachers were entertained at the lodge of a gentleman's mansion near Potter's Bar.

"ANGELS UNAWARES."

THEY were a happy couple on that cold Christmas Eve, as Uncle John drew in his chair to the fire, took up a paper, put on his spectacles, and began to read. The house was quiet and glowing with comfort. It was the home of sweetness and light. One thing was wanting. They could never say, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." Uncle John was childless. Often had they wished that God would send them only one; but years rolled on, and children came not; so they had quietly said, "The will of the Lord be done." They were a loving, modest couple, fearing God, and serving Him in the shade; content to be unknown, and yet often wishing they could do, as well as be, something for their Lord. The church which they attended scarcely knew of their existence; but a wise Ruler on high, who never fails to see and honour humble worth, had prepared for them some work, as hand-in-hand they descended the dark valley. Light was

coming at eventide—coming, as so many of our Father's choicest blessings do come, out of the night. And truly it was dark and stormy without; so stormy, that Uncle John's wife often said, as the wild blasts made their cottage shake, "God help the poor who have no home!"

As she sat knitting some stockings Uncle John grew heavy and slept. The paper dropped from his hand upon the floor, and his spectacles were in danger of following it. His careful wife, to avoid such a catastrophe, shook him, and said, "You are sleeping, John!"

"Me sleeping!" he said in amazement; "nothing of the kind." And he rubbed his eyes. "I think I had better go to bed. Nobody will come to see us. We haven't children to wait for."

There was a tone of sadness in his waning voice, as he said, "Hand me over the Bible." The portion of Scripture which he read was that which, while it says, "Let brotherly love continue," also says, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."

When he had finished reading, and the solemn "Amen" was uttered, they two knelt in faith before the Unseen, while Uncle John cried for mercy. His prayer was long, orthodox, and earnest; and as the silvery tones of his voice echoed in the solemn silence within, angry gusts dashed themselves against the house. But the dear old man heard them not: he was amidst the eternal calm and in the holy of holies, pleading with Jesus to help them in their weakness, and also to remember the homeless and forlorn.

During the prayer his wife was restless. She heard some one knocking, and therefore welcomed the emancipating "Amen." While her husband was rubbing his eyes, she went to the door and listened. "Do you hear that, John?"

"Hear what?"

"A knock at the door."

"Nonsense; it's only the wind driving the sleet against it."

"Wait a little, then." They did wait, and sure enough there it was, a firm but gentle knocking.

"Open the door," said Uncle John.

"Maybe it's a robber."

"No fear; robbers don't give warning. However, we had better be careful. I'll come with the candle and open it myself."

With some hesitation they undid the fastenings, when there rushed in upon them a furious blast, putting out their light, and driving themselves in darkness back into the kitchen. Uncle John struck a match in some fear, when there, upon the floor, stood no robber indeed, but a "touzie wee laddie," bareheaded, barefooted, his breast open, and showing a pure white skin. He seemed not at all abashed, but waited with a sad and comical gravity. Aunt Mary was the first to speak.

"Well, my little fellow, who are you?"

"My name is Curly, and I am hungry," was the ready and suggestive remark.

"And what do you want?"

"I have no home, and I thought you would let me in for a night. I am only a little boy, and won't take up much room."

Aunt Mary looked at Uncle John; Uncle John looked at Aunt Mary; and they both looked at Curly, whose clear blue eyes implored them to shelter him from the storm. "Angels unawares!" thought Uncle John. Not very angel-like as he stands before the fire, his wet clothes steaming with the heat; and yet who knows but Jesus has sent His little brother to be unto them a son?

Aunt Mary's eyes said, "Yea;" Uncle John's voice did not say "Nay;" and so it came to pass that "Wee Curly" found a home—was nursed and warmed; and while Aunt Mary was getting ready a little bed for him, he nestled cosily in a blanket upon Uncle John's knees. Ere going to bed they knelt again, and a prayer not heard in that house before, ascended to heaven, "God bless our little boy!"

Rather a thoughtless action of the old couple, you say, gentle reader. Perhaps so; but that kind of thoughtlessness which comes from simple trust in God may not be far removed from the profoundest wisdom. Wise or foolish, they two believed that, in answer to their prayers, God had at length sent them a child to keep for Him, and they loyally accepted the gift. Curly remained with them. They made some inquires after his parents, and found they were dead, and that he had not a friend in the world except themselves.

So the lad grew and the Lord was with him. No doubt he was a merry, mischief-making little fellow; consuming no end of bread, shoe leather, and clothes; getting into all sorts of scrapes as he ran, in wild delight, through the merry years of boyhood. Trouble also came upon him and he almost died; but with care he rallied, and arose the same bouncing, rollicking lad as ever. If an angel, truly a rough specimen. But in Uncle John's eyes he was perfect. Often would he say, "There never was such a good boy as Curly. God bless him! he'll come to something yet, whoever lives to see it."

Oh, it was beautiful to see the grand old man bending in admiration over Curly's slate, and watching the stream of figures which he poured from his pencil with a readiness Uncle John could admire, but could not equal or control! Beautiful also to see them side by side at food, dividing the same bread, and often eating out of the same dish; Uncle John content to have little, if only Curly's voracious appetite could be appeased. And when the noisy little fellow would rush in from school, throw his books down upon the floor, and proclaim his day's triumphs, Uncle John would listen, and his eyes gleam with pleasure, as he said: "Go on, Curly; mind the figures and you'll come to something. Leave poetry and novels to idle people; but get you the figures, and they'll do something for you when I am dead and gone." So the years rolled on, during which Uncle John's hair whitened, his step grew feeble, and the strong man bowed himself. He was failing. But there was one thing which failed not, and that was his quenchless love to Curly, who was now fast becoming a man. He clung to him with more than a father's love. To other people he was sometimes cross and stern—harsh to such a degree that men sometimes cursed him to his face; but to Curly he was always gentle. He never spoke an unkind word to him; was ready to give up all he had to him; and, if needful, would have laid down his life for him.

Troubles came heavily upon the old man, and it seemed as if Curly must

be separated from them for ever. These were dark days, and that a very dark night when they three sat before the fire, and Curly, now a strong youth, quietly said, "I am afraid I must leave home and do for myself now. I am a burden to you."

"Oh, Curly," said Uncle John, "don't speak of going away. If you must go, then bury me first; for I cannot live without you." And the old man's eyes filled with tears, while he and his faithful wife clung to the lad, who was now dearer to them than even life itself.

That night settled the matter for ever in Curly's mind. He would not, he could not, leave them. A new spirit entered into him at the voice of their love. He learned through it to feel what the great Father's heart must be; and, ere long, amidst the night which had gathered around Uncle John, Curly became a light shining in a dark place, till on the old man the day dawned and the day-star arose. Turning to him, Curly said, with a strange firmness,

"You took me in when I was a stranger; you fed me when I was hungry; you clothed me when I was naked; and, God helping me, I shall, never leave you."

And he did not; but, as he grew to be a man, known and honoured by those who had once despised him, he clung fast to the old man, and cheered him amidst all the weakness and sorrow of a friendless old age.

Poet's Corner.

GATHER UP THE FRAGMENTS.

TIME on noiseless wings is flying,
Oh, how swiftly by!
Like a waterfall aye rushing,
Or a fountain ever gushing;
Hourly, daily, weekly, yearly,
Rapid as the lightning nearly,
Do the moments fly.

Catch the *seconds* as they're passing—
Wait not for the hours;
Prize ye them as golden treasures;
Waste them not in trifling pleasures;
Seconds, minutes, prizing, holding
As you would those buds unfolding
Into choicest flowers.

Ever act with earnest purpose,
Not with selfish zeal:
See! humanity is bleeding,
Aid thy fellow-man is needing:
Hundreds, thousands, millions, hear them
Breathing out their woes! go near them—
Seek their wounds to heal.

Days, and months, and years, all freighted
With the deeds of man,
Have been borne to GOD the Giver,
And recalled by mortal never!
O be wakeful, watch to prayer:
Eternal things make thy first care,
Since life is but a span.

Teachers' Column.

THE TEACHER QUESTIONED.

A LADY was teaching a class of interesting lads in the Sunday-school on the subject of "Showing our love for Jesus." At its close, she asked them one by one if they had done a single thing for Jesus during the week. Some answered only by a silent shake of the head and a downcast eye, but all signified in some way the same sorrowful negative.

A thoughtful boy beside the teacher looked up at last, and asked respectfully, but anxiously, "Miss M——, have you done something for Jesus?"

The unexpected question crimsoned her cheek and filled her eyes with tears, as she answered with deep feeling: "I hope so, John; but I know I have not done what I ought or might have done for Him."

Wherever she went through all that week, and many weeks, the question still followed her: "What have I done for Jesus?" It quickened her footsteps on the heavenward journey. It made her more earnest and laborious in Christ's service, and soon the fruit was manifest. One, and another, and another of her little circle became also workers for Jesus.

O Christian, it is not the great question for you at nightfall, "How much have my golden gains been to-day?" but, "What have I done for Jesus?"

A young man but recently converted was taken with a mortal illness. Though his hopes were clear and bright, he was often very sorrowful. One day, as the end was drawing near, he was heard to say with anguish: "Lost! lost! lost!"

In surprise his sorrowing mother asked, "My son, are your hopes feeble?"

"No, mother; but oh, my lost lifetime! I am twenty-four, and until within a few weeks nothing has been done for Christ, and everything for myself and my own pleasure. Oh that I could do something to show my sincerity and to redeem my lost, lost lifetime!"

Will not many of us sigh in that hour at the remembrance of the good we might have done, which we have foolishly suffered to glide away for ever from our hands? "Neglected opportunities," said a Sunday-school teacher, "will form the saddest chapter in my history."

There is work, abundant work, at hand for every one of us. Shall we not take it up as moment by moment God gives it to us?

HOW TO REACH PARENTS.—A PARABLE.

A MAN came to a pool in which he observed many fishes, and at length noticed that they were very tame; and as he walked around the edge of the pool they followed, and as he put his hand into the water they clustered round it, and were entirely fearless of injury.

He wondered why they were so tame, and on the owner's coming near he inquired what had produced such a state. He was told that the present

proprietor obtaining possession of the pool, there were no fish in it, and that he had procured some old fishes and put them into the water. They quickly concealed themselves, and he rarely caught sight of any of them.

After some time young fishes were seen, and food thrown to them. At first they were shy; but soon they learned to love the bread, and when it was seen on the water, they darted from their shelters and eagerly seized it, and finally became fearless and so tame that they knew their owner, and when he appeared by the side of the pool they came towards him to be fed.

After a good while an old fish was occasionally seen, perhaps only a head from behind a hiding place, then another came out, and oftener, until at last the old fishes rushed with the young ones, and came tamely and confidently to receive bread from the hand of the feeder. —*Young Pilgrim.*

STUDYING CHILDREN.

It is not from Bible and commentary alone that the teacher is to learn the lesson which he is to teach to his class. There is a book which has never been written or printed, a book called Human Nature, which is a better commentary than any devised by theologians.

The mind of each pupil is a luminous page, and every preference, every dislike, every habit, is a letter in the alphabet of soul interpretation, and must needs be familiar to the teacher.

He is not only to discover truth, but also to apply it; and he cannot make fit applications without a thorough knowledge of spiritual conditions in each case. To attempt the enforcement of Bible truth without taking accurate account of personal states of mind and heart is to dishonour the work of the Lord. He never does a "ready made" business. His every truth is prepared expressly for each needy soul and adapted to its peculiar wants. The teacher who spends all his time upon the lesson which lies in books, and gives none to the lesson hidden in the hearts or taught by the lives of his scholars, does only half his duty.

It follows that there should be other meetings of teacher and scholar than the regular one on Sunday. Every social gathering, every chance encounter, every possible neighbourly service should be improved as an opportunity for observing the main purpose and the complicated side purposes which sway the children's minds. Home influences should be considered, personal companionships understood, hereditary and educational prejudices estimated; and the very constitution of the child—mental, moral, and affectional—studied with painstaking care. For teaching is both a science and an art; and he who thinks he can succeed while ignoring either general principles or technical applications is certain to make a great many failures.

Let Christians, therefore, be not only full of the Gospel, but also full of that which made Him who brought the Gospel the only practical Saviour—knowledge of the human heart.

Children's Gallery.

HAVE YOU TOLD JESUS?

My dear young friends, many of you have boxes for the Ragged Schools which you are anxious to fill, and hardly know where to get the money. If you feel a little discouraged, and are sometimes inclined to give up collecting, perhaps the account of Leodine Harvy, a little girl who lived in a beautiful town on the coast of Devonshire, may encourage you to persevere.

Leodine attended a Bible Class for

young ladies. She was very fond of her teacher, who took great pains with her, and was most anxious that all the dear girls should make Jesus Christ their friend, and should tell him all their desires and all their troubles.

One day Leodine appeared at her teacher's house with a very mournful countenance. Being asked what was the matter, she replied, bursting into tears, "Oh! Miss Lennox, I cannot get any money for my Ragged School box. I have asked everybody I can think of, and I do not know what to do."

"My dear Leodine," said Miss Lennox, "do you remember what the disciples did when they had toiled all night and could not catch any fish?"

"Yes, Miss Lennox, they told Jesus about it."

"And what did Jesus say to them?"

"He told them where to cast the net, and they caught a great many fishes."

"And do you not think that Jesus Christ knows where the money is, as well as he knew where the fishes were?"

"Yes, of course he does, I never thought of that before."

"Well then, dear Leodine, dry your tears and go home, and pray to Jesus, and ask him to help you, and come to me this day week and tell me what you have done."

Before the week was ended the little girl came again to her kind friend, her face beaming with joy, and exclaimed, "Feel how heavy my box is, Miss Lennox; it is quite full; I have seventeen shillings since I last saw you. I went home and told Jesus my trouble, and afterwards I thought of so many persons whom I had not asked before, and I went to them, and they all gave me some money. Now I am quite happy."

Now, my dear young friends, we may learn from this little anecdote how kind and gracious the Saviour is. He hears and answers the prayers of even a little child. You need never think that your troubles are too trifling to bring to Jesus, for He will fill your hearts with comfort, while you are seeking to do His holy will, and He will ever guide you in the right way. ELLA.

GIVING UP HER DINNER.

THE children of St. Giles's Ragged Schools have a dinner once a week in winter. One day when the dinner was to be had, a little girl of the Ragged School who was entitled to come to dinner brought with her to school that morning a girl about twelve years old, in the most deplorable condition. The little stranger was introduced to the teacher, and a modest request made thus: "Please, teacher, will you let this little girl come to dinner to-day, *instead of me!*"

"Why, my dear?" said the teacher.

"Because she's got no mother or father, and she is starving, teacher, and she's got no home, for the landlord turned her and her sister out of the room because the rent was not paid, and they have been sleeping on the stairs of houses and door-steps for several nights."

The teacher's heart melted, the appeal was all powerful, the consent was given, and the little advocate and her companion had the pleasure of dining together that day. At the dinner-table the young stranger was introduced to the secretary, and the result was that the "homeless" and starving one was received into the Refuge.

This child's father was once a respectable tradesman in London!

Not many rich children would like to go without their dinner to give it to a starving child. But, happily, there are some, whom we know. Are you, dear young reader, among that Christ-like number?

Editor's Note-book.

FISHERS OF MEN.

Improve the time. All being ready, put out your line at once, and keep it out every moment possible, as you cannot tell the minute when you make take a big fish. Hold forth the Word continually—in season and out of season. Only yesterday a young lady just converted wrote to me: "Do you remember in your letter to my brother urging him to a Christian life, that you added, 'I think your eldest sister is a Christian'?" That troubled me. I knew I was not a Christian, and I knew that I ought to be one. Keep out your line.

Be sure and keep your spool whirling lively and bright. Make the truth fresh and attractive. Turn its bright sides to men's hearts. If you can add a bright feather from the wing of fancy, it will be all the better.

Row often over the same ground. The fish that is not quite ready to take hold this time round, may spring for it the next. No matter if other more expert fishermen than you have been over the ground before you. God may give to those hitherto indifferent an eye to your hook. Be careful about saying, "There are no fish to be caught there."

Be prepared for some disappointments. Now and then your hopes will be greatly raised, only to be greatly dashed. You may reel a splendid fellow to the boat's side, and just when you are sure of him, off he will slip from the hook, and you will lose him. You will sometimes be sure a man is stepping into the kingdom, and the next you know he is in the deep water of wordliness and scepticism.

Finally, be patient. This is the supreme, indispensable quality in a good fisherman. A fisherman's patience is proverbial, the world over. You must learn to fish the whole day without taking a single fish, or even having a bite, and yet consider that you have had a good time, and go at it again, bright and cheerful, the next day. Above all things, be not weary in well-doing, if you would catch souls.—*Rev. Dr. Ballord.*

DO WHAT IS BEFORE YOU.

Do whatever there is to be done without questioning and without calculation. Make progress in things moral. If need be, utter stammering words. Would you console the troubled if you only had a ready tongue? Take the tongue that you have. Ring the bell that hangs in your steeple, if you can do no better. Do as well as you can. That is all that God requires of you. Would you pray with the needy and tempted if you had eminent gifts of prayer? Use the gifts that you have. Do not measure yourself according to the pattern of somebody else. Do not say to yourself, "If I had his skill," or, "If I had his experience." Take your own skill and your own experience, and make the most of them. Do you stand over against trouble and suffering, and marvel that men whom God hath blessed with such means do so little? Do you say to yourself, "If I had money, I know what I would do with it"? No, you do not. God does, and so he does not trust you with it. "If I had something different from what I have I would work," says many a man. No, if you would work in other circumstances, you would work just where you are. A man that will not work just where he is, with just what he has, and for the love of God and for the love of man, will not work anywhere in such a way as to make his work valuable.—*Rev. H. W. Beecher.*

Facts and Scraps.

BABY FARMING.—The Metropolitan Board of Works are the local authority for the metropolis constituted by the "Act for the Better Protection of Infant Life," passed last session. They have given notice that, from the 1st of November next, it becomes unlawful for any person to receive or retain for hire or reward more than one infant, or, in the case of twins, more than two infants under the age of one year, for the purpose of nursing or maintaining such infants apart from their parents for a longer period than twenty-four hours, except in a house which has been registered by the local authority.

PUBLIC LAUNDRIES.—A sum is being raised with which to provide a small public laundry, as a commencement, in the crowded neighbourhood of the Grassmarket, Edinburgh. By paying a trifle, poor women of that miserable district may wash, dry, and mangle their clothes in comfort. At the same time, the clothes of the sick and old may be taken in at a small charge, so as to give a few destitute women partial employment, and thus serve as a labour test.

SUNDAY HOMES FOR YOUNG WOMEN.—A movement has begun for the benefit of the large number of young females employed in the metropolis. Being separated from home influences, they find themselves on Sundays with their time on hand and no place to which they can go. In many large establishments where these young persons are employed, they are provided with board and lodging for six days in the week, but on Sundays they are expected to visit their friends, and no provision is therefore made for them by their employers. Such an arrangement, in many instances, has the effect of throwing these young persons into associations the reverse of desirable. In order to meet this evil a home has been opened at 90, Camden Street, Camden Town, for the purpose of affording a Sunday Home to young persons thus situated.

NIGHT RECEPTION HOUSE, MANCHESTER STREET.—A new home for friendless and fallen women has been opened. The object of this institution is to offer food and a night's shelter to any woman, whether fallen or only without friends, who may find herself in London streets alone and without a home. Such a person, upon ringing the bell of the refuge, will be taken in (if any of the twenty-two beds should be vacant), be refreshed with nourishment, and will be shown to a bed for the night. If she is a respectable woman the accommodation that will be afforded her is of a more comfortable description than if she is one who has lost her character.

FRIENDLY AND BENEFIT SOCIETIES.—The second report of the commissioners appointed in October, 1870, to inquire into the working of the Acts relating to Friendly and Benefit Building Societies is confined almost exclusively to the latter branch of the subject. The magnitude of the interests affected by the inquiry may be gathered from the fact that the commissioners estimate the number of benefit building societies alone in England and Wales at 2,000, with an average of 400 members each, or about 800,000 members altogether. These 2,000 societies, it is estimated further, have a subscribed capital of over £9,000,000, a loan and deposit capital of more than £6,000,000, and an income exceeding £11,000,000. Their total assets are supposed to be over £17,000,000, and they have more than £16,000,000 advanced in mortgage. A single society, indeed, has a yearly income of over a million and a half, while another has more than nine hundred thousand pounds due to it on mortgage advances. The movement may almost be said to be confined to England and Wales.